

tion which we do not normally give to prose, and which is proportionately tiring to the novice. So it will be found better to sample many poets, to begin with, in this way and through their finest or most characteristic work, than to attempt individual poets in detail. This method, moreover, affords a greater variety, which is a relief to the strain of attention, and the poems included in anthologies are not as a rule over-long.

There are many excellent anthologies, of which one need only mention here the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, and Rhys' *New Golden Treasury*, both in Everyman, the English Association's series of *Poems of Today*, and Methuen's *Anthology of Modern Verse*, which contains Robert Lynd's charming essay already mentioned. Wonderful value are the little Pelican volumes, *A Book of English Poetry*, and the various parts of the Centuries' Poetry. The Poetry Society also issues a cheap and carefully-selected *Pocket-Book of English Poetry*. Admirable slim pocket selections of individual poets are the Augustan Books issued by Ernest Benn, of which well over a hundred titles have already been published.

Arnold Bennett, in the short and provocative section on verse in his *Literary Taste* (of which by the way a revised edition is available in the Pelican series) and W H Hudson in the chapter on Poetry in his *Introduction to the Study of English Literature*, both have some very sensible advice on the reading of poetry which should appeal to the average man and woman, and taken in conjunction with the suggestions already offered here, may attract the interest even of those who have sought most desperately shy of poetry so far. If perchance some are thus won over to the abiding joy and infinite resource of poetry, they may be lastingly grateful for a new enrichment of life.

In such an intimate and personal matter as taste in poetry, the reader who has come to appreciate it in the way above indicated is best left to find his own further paths in the new realm. The poets will by no means make the same appeal to all, and the reader must learn his own preferences by the natural and pleasant method of reading what most appeals to him irrespective of the

author's literary reputation. Taste will grow in discernment and strength only with exercise. Among the classics are Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, Herrick, Gray, Byron, Pope, Crabbe, Cowper, Burns, Keats, Shelley, Scott, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, D G Rossetti, Tennyson (with Fitz-Gerald's *Omar Khayyam* in a special category), Walt Whitman and Swinburne, to whom may be added Bridges, Masefield, and very many poets writing lately or at the present day, examples of whose work will be found in one or other of the anthologies or the Augustan booklets. Good editions of most of the classic poets exist in the Oxford books, the Canterbury poets, Everyman and World's Classics, and other volumes.

Poetry is essential a solitary and individual pleasure, but some like to enjoy it in company with congenial souls, and in this connection reference may be made to the Poetry Society, which encourages the formation of local branches or poetry-reading circles, and issues an excellent review for a modest subscription. Its quiet work in any case deserves support.

One last point. Poetry has been defined as "musical thought." In expression, it is musical speech, and by merely reading poetry to oneself in the printed pages, much of its force is lost. Poetry was originally composed to be declaimed in public, and by its very form and rhythm, it can only be fully appreciated by being read aloud. The habit of audible poetry-reading may heighten our appreciation of its beauties and perhaps react beneficially on our use of the English tongue. The declamatory value of poetry was fully appreciated by a modern American poet, Vachel Lindsay, who composed his poems especially to be recited by himself up and down the land, and all those who heard him, as did the present writer, were far more deeply impressed than they would have been or were by merely reading the same poems in print. There was lately a movement to have poetry readings in public, nay, even in public-houses, and there seems no reason why this should not be encouraged just as much as, say, chamber concerts—if not in pubs, at least in community centres, town

halls or libraries. The Poetry Society holds such readings and they might well be extended.

Analogous to this is the question of broadcasting poetry. The BBC does a certain amount of this, but often it appears in a rather surreptitious or shamefaced manner, in very small snippets and at awkward times. Moreover, they generally insist on "producing" the poetry with music and declamation, which is distracting. Much could be done for the wide dissemination of a love of poetry (with only slight encroachment on the immense dreary patches of "variety," jazz and third-rate music), if the BBC were to give regularly at reasonable times and lengths, straightforward readings from the inexhaustibly rich and varied treasure-house of English poetry.

Let each of us, even the most matter-of-fact, at least resolve that we will not leave poetry entirely out of our lives.

## *Walking*

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Now let us take a deep breath, and with one or two friendly books in knapsack or pocket, go forth into the open air, source of all health and natural joy in life—although we have not finished with indoor pursuits yet, and will return to some later. But just now for the Open Road, the “wind on the heath,” and the world out of doors!

I have two favourite methods of getting about, apart of course from long-distance travel, and they are walking and cycling. Though I love both, I have perhaps a greater affection for the second, but it is after all only an extension (for of course I don’t mean motor-cycling) of the natural method of progression, and therefore walking comes first here. Much of what I have to say applies *mutatis mutandis* to cycling also.

Surely there is no more healthy and enjoyable pastime than walking, open to all, rich and poor, young and old, who still have the free use of their limbs! Do not all creatures of routine and respectability sometimes envy the sturdy tramp on the roads, and have to suppress a wild impulse to fling business and responsibilities to the winds and take to the road themselves, though minus the discomforts and drawbacks which however seem to trouble our brother the tramp very little. Even the most conventional and routine-bound amongst us have this feral instinct, this wander-lust implanted deep within (in Chaucer’s days it took the form of “than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages”); and there is no reason why, within limits at least, we should not satisfy it, with infinite benefit both to mind and body. Increasing numbers of the younger generation of both sexes happily have taken to the roads, as the growth of the tramping (we have no use for “hiking”), youth-hostel and cycling movements show.

We naturally associate walking with the delights of the countryside and coast, with the moors, downs, fells and dales, and these are of course its natural element; but even within cities

walks may be fraught with interest of a different kind, drawn from the constantly changing human pageant and the urban scene. Dickens, we know, was a great walker about London, often walking through the greater part of the night, and the fruits of his observation and the thoughts engendered are immortalized in his books. Many others have found diurnal and nocturnal London (and other great cities) a fascinating spectacle, and Stephen Graham, who condemns cities, makes suggestions for "zig-zag" walks about town in his *Gentle Art of Tramping*.

But this is not the Open Road, whose joys have been so amply celebrated by writers who we trust have practised what they preached. Of at least one this was abundantly true, since he gave most of his life to it, and died at a very advanced age, proudly able to claim his thirty miles a day up to quite late in life. This was the "walking parson," the Rev A. N. Cooper, rector of Filey in Yorkshire, whose books are still worth reading. Another of his cloth who followed the same example, the Rev. Frank Tatchell, will be mentioned later in a different connection. But George Borrow, when well over seventy, still walked twelve hours a day at an average of little under five miles an hour. The literature of walking is indeed as wide as its horizons and only a few outstanding titles need be mentioned here. No one should miss that classic and delightful essay of Hazlitt's "On Going a Journey," to which may perhaps be added R. L. Stevenson's "Walking Tours." Then there is of course Hilaire Belloc's *The Path to Rome*, which helped to set everyone on the road. Stephen Graham, besides his *Gentle Art of Tramping* already mentioned, which contains much useful advice, also compiled a *Tramp's Anthology*, which, with E. V. Lucas's well-known *Open Road*, make very good pocket companions for any journey. In another category is W. H. Davies' personal story, the *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*.

The "walking parson" recommended only one method of making the feet fit for the road, and that was to harden them by constant walking, and it is indeed the best and only effective way. Comfortable and pliable boots or shoes, roomy for the toes

without being loose, sensible clothes which must be left to individual taste, a rucksack with outside pockets for books, maps, etc., leaving the hands free, and perhaps a light ash stick, are obvious desirables.

Since the essence of a walking (or cycling) holiday is its freedom, it is best not to make any rigid plans beyond the general direction or district in or to which one is bound, nor to resolve upon daily mileages or any fixed programme in advance, but to leave it all flexible, so that it may be changed or varied as inclination suggests. In this country normally, there should be no difficulty about a bed for the night, and to start out in the morning without knowing where one will rest at night surely adds to the spirit of adventure and the feeling of freedom from the shackles of routine. Besides, there is the recurring delight of starting afresh each morning on a new day's adventure. If one is having a change of linen or the like posted ahead, this may be sent *poste restante* to some town which in any case one wishes to visit, where it can await arrival. As to correspondence, the joy of a walking holiday is to go off "into the blue", and there is always the telephone system.

Hazlitt considers that it is best to walk alone, others prefer a companion or companions, provided they are really congenial; it is a matter of taste or mood, and both may be tried. If one is alone, there are always the chance encounters of the road to mitigate or enliven one's otherwise happy solitude, these are always pleasant or interesting, and can often be memorable. In any case, one is always surrounded by the life of the road and the countryside, the pleasure of the changing scene, and the excitement of coming into new villages and towns.

Though, as I have said, there is little difficulty in this country of getting a bed for the night, especially if one's requirements are simple, as they should be on a walking tour, the Youth Hostels movement has added to the facilities available by covering the country with simple hostels where one can get a bed or bunk for a shilling and plain fare at very moderate prices, or facilities are provided for preparing one's own meals. Though

primarily intended for young people of both sexes under twenty-five, the Association does not exclude older people, and I have been a life member of the Association from the start. Similar movements exist in other countries, and membership of one affords reciprocal facilities in the others. It is usual to take a sleeping bag which also covers the pillow, and a light-weight pattern is available which takes little space in the rucksack and weighs only a few ounces. The accommodation, though always clean, is of course of the simplest, but anyone who, like the present writer, has spent the night at a hostel after a day-long tramp or ride in the open air, can testify to a hearty appetite for the plainest fare and sound sleep at night. Experienced and friendly wardens are in charge of most of the hostels and one can often find pleasant company in the common rooms with which to exchange stories of the road and learn of other peoples' tours and experiences.

It may be anticipated that there will be increasingly available rather more advanced facilities in camps and other hostels for those who desire something more than the bare minimum, including privacy at night, and there is always of course the friendly inn, and farmhouse and other simple lodgings. With the *Y.H.A. Guide* and the *C.T.C. Handbook* in the rucksack, one need never be at a loss, apart from the simple expedient of keeping one's eyes open and asking in a village or of roadside cottages, and especially of the ever-helpful local police.

Besides the solitary or companioned walk or tour, there is of course the rambling party, a method of enjoying both company and the countryside which, judging from the evidence afforded by any fine week-end near large towns, appeals to a great many, especially of the younger generation. Rambling clubs are organized in many towns and districts and it is usual for them to be affiliated to the National Federation of Rambling Clubs, which is also glad to have individual members. Whether solitary or gregarious, I would strongly recommend membership of this body, for, in conjunction with the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society and other bodies, it does much useful work

for walkers everywhere, issues a journal and handbook, and is always ready to help with advice as to tours, the loan of maps, and other facilities. For besides possessing rights and privileges to be safeguarded, the pedestrian in the countryside also has duties, such as the closing of gates, avoidance of litter or of danger from fire, which should be observed. Some walking clubs, like the famous Sunday Tramps, have become permanent and delightful companionships of the road.

There is one body which has strong claims upon all our support, and that is the National Trust. Like Bernard Shaw, I get far more pleasure from owning something in common with others who share my enjoyment of it than I should derive from exclusive possession of any property, and the fact that, as a member of the National Trust I am one of the largest owners of land, estates and property in England, with ever-growing and inalienable riches, more than justifies my modest annual subscription. Some day I intend to make a round of all my properties, and I can imagine no more delightful excuse or objective for a tour or series of walking or cycling tours throughout Britain. Other bodies which are doing good work are the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and the Scapa Society.

# *The Joy of Maps*

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For the walker and the cyclist, even more than for the motorist, there is nothing like a good map, but a map is far more than a mere aid to finding the way, and that is why it is given a section to itself under the above title. Some people unaccustomed to them find maps at first sight rather puzzling things, but to the map-reader, I would say the map-lover, a map is far more than an open book, it is both a mental picture and a complete history of a whole countryside.

From a small boy, I have always had a love of maps, a love which I believe is shared by many other people, and the older the map the greater the fascination. Early specimens of the cartographer's art with their imaginative peopling and delineation of unknown territories, with monsters sporting in the deep and Aeolian cherubs blowing ships along their way, these make a special appeal, but old maps of all kinds have their own attractions. As a young Londoner, I revelled in maps of old London showing Kensington and Islington far out in the country and the village of Charing Cross still a stage on the way to the palace of Whitehall and the Abbey in its fields. And then to watch it grow, to see the houses ever creeping onwards and outwards, swallowing up the villages and the whole countryside! There was a collection of maps and engravings in the Bishopsgate Institute which gave me a more vivid, because visual, impression of the growth of London than any books could do.

But old maps appeal mainly to our sense of the past, and their interest is antiquarian rather than cartographical. I want to speak here of the fascination of maps of today, and of the pleasures of map-reading, which are little if at all less than those of book-reading. Stephen Graham says that maps ought to be used as wallpaper, and perhaps we all should have a wider mental horizon and background if these had been preferred to the meaningless and repetitive patterns of the paper designers, and

we had learned to see countrysides as Oliver Wendell Holmes grew up with books. My own favourite wallpaper consists of well-lined bookshelves, but maps run them perilously close in my affections. If we cannot in these days of exiguous living-space paper our rooms with maps, at least we could mount a selection of them on light slats or hinged screens close to a good light, and keep the rest handy to pin up at need. We hear of enthusiasts collecting every imaginable article from postage-stamps and rail-tickets to snuff-boxes and grandfather clocks, but why do we not more often collect maps? True, there is nothing rare or curious about the products of the Ordnance or other surveys, but it could be a very rewarding and enriching pleasure.

To many people, maps are rather bewildering at first sight, but a little patient study will reveal more and more of the wealth of information they have to yield. Take the one-inch Ordnance maps, which are the marvellously accurate and detailed basis of all maps in this country, and are ideal for walkers and even for the leisurely cyclist, though the latter may be better served by Bartholomew's half-inch or the Ordnance quarter-inch, as covering a greater area in sufficient detail for his purpose. To the novice, it may be explained that these terms mean that each inch of the map, the "scale" of it, represents one mile, two miles or four miles on the ground. Study the symbols and explanation given in the margins, and then trace out at home a walk along any of the roads or paths shown, noticing everything on either side and in the country round as you (figuratively) go. After a while, the map will begin to come alive to you, and you will have as clear a mental picture of the countryside as if you were actually marching through it, in some respects clearer, for you have more leisure on the map. The contour lines will show you the general aspect of the country, the hills and valleys, and everything else in the landscape is indicated by its appropriate sign, the churches, whether with spire or tower, the villages and farms, woods and lakes, railways, bridges, streams, ferries, locks, fieldpaths, inns, and so forth. Ancient remains, Roman and

British ways, battlefields, monasteries, all are shown. But it is the local names which fascinate me, and they often take one back over the whole history of the district. Maps are indeed often more eloquent than guide-books, for they combine everything in one picture or frame.

For the walker and cyclist, there is no keener pleasure than to pore over maps both of prospective or possible tours, and in retrospect, of tours just concluded, to verify further details, or of those undertaken in the past, to recall happy memories. It is difficult to say which is the greater pleasure, anticipatory or retrospective. Some people mark out their tours on the maps, but with much recrossings and duplications in favourite districts, the map would soon be rendered useless for other service. If you want to calculate distances, you can get a little wheel to run along roads and paths, or a piece of string laid along their sinuosities and checked against the scale will serve as well. Remember to look at the points of the compass, and especially the north point, shown on the map in relation to where you may stand.

The various touring organizations, motorists, cyclists, and ramblers, are always ready to give help and advice with maps and itineraries. Much that I have said about maps applies also to good guide-books, which usually include small-scale or sketch maps, such as those of the Blue Guide series, the County, Highways and Byways, Blacks, Penguins and others. I always use both maps and guides.

## *Cycling, etc.*

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HAS any single mechanical invention brought about such an entirely beneficial social revolution in this country as that of the bicycle? The same can scarcely be said of the application of the internal-combustion engine to the motor-car, though that may be so in America. Since its first introduction, the bicycle has run the gamut of all the social classes until now it is the possession of all the people, and with its progressive improvement, wherever it has come, especially in the great towns, it has brought health and pleasure, and both physical benefit and spiritual enlargement, in its train. There are said to be ten million users of bicycles in this country, but in some countries such as Holland and Denmark, the percentage of the total population using bicycles is even higher. It is used widely both in work and pleasure, both the farm labourer and the town worker use it for their daily journeys, and it is the means whereby tens of thousands of lads and lassies in the great towns all over the country escape from their penthouses to the freedom of the countryside. It is the vehicle for both sexes and for all ages from the youngest to the oldest, there are many healthy octogenarians still enjoying their regular rides.

It is proposed to speak here of cycling not as a sport or as a pursuit in itself, but rather as a means to an end, the end being the same as that achieved by walking, freedom of healthy and pleasurable movement, and change of scene and interest, in the open air. In that sense, it is but an extension of walking, in which the bicycle, by exchanging rotary for pedestrian motion, enlarges one's radius of travel without extra exertion. True, one has not quite the same freedom as the walker, but it is wonderful where you can take a bicycle in this country.

When one has mastered the nice art of balancing astride two wheels, and with the modern low-built machine, that is very easy and once learned is never forgotten, one is suddenly

franchised of the whole country. Some people speak contemptuously of the "push-bike" (horrid term, like "hike" and "hiker") but unless one has ambitions as a "speed merchant" of the nose-to-handle variety, there is far less need for undue exertion on the modern light roadster with three or four speed-changes at command than on a day's tramp. Although there is immense exhilaration in a fine level road, or a favouring gradient or breeze, with a high gear and a consciousness of vigorous health and rapid motion, normally speed and mere mileage should not be the desiderata, but just enjoyment and pleasant exercise in the open air. The walker in good fettle and practice has a great sense of achievement and well-being in accomplishing a long day's record tramp, or the climber in a strenuous day's climbing; so equally has the keen cyclist in "knocking up a century". but all these things, like the sheer fascination of speed to the motorist, are something apart, and belong rather to the sporting aspect of each pastime, to the achievement for its own sake. Walking or cycling, it does not matter whether you have covered fifty miles or five, at two or twenty miles an hour, in a morning or spread over the whole day, so long as you have enjoyed yourself. With the modern bicycle, moreover, there is virtually nothing to go wrong except a very occasional puncture, and that, with good hard tyres and ordinary care on our roads today, should be an exceedingly rare and slight mishap. A light, low-built bicycle, a good saddle and tyres, and a 3- or 4-speed gear properly used, makes cycling easy in any kind of country, and for a dull or difficult stretch, or to pass from one touring district to another, one can always put the bicycle on rail.

I have enjoyed cycling now for nearly forty years (with intervals of two wars) and hope to go on enjoying it for many years more. I am fond, too, of walking, and have done a fair amount of motoring, apart from going about the earth's surface in trains, buses, and ships and above it in aeroplanes, but I should be unhappy without my bicycle. Born and bred in city streets, I owe to it my first real knowledge of the English country scene. I have used it for all purposes, for exploring London, as well as

the country, and for that matter, other countries, until now I am as accustomed to it as to walking. Indeed, I learned in traffic, and as soon as I could balance but before I could mount unaided, went off into East Anglia, the forerunner of how many delightful and memorable tours?

For cycle-touring is the real joy of cycling, though there is pleasure and profit to be got from the shortest ride, and a tour may last anything from a week-end to a month or more. Some of my happiest tours have lasted just five days, from Friday to Tuesday, helped by the rail-and-cycle week-end ticket out and home. A cycle tour is really a walking tour on wheels, it should possess the same freedom and flexibility, but with a wider radius. All that I have said about walking tours, therefore, applies equally here. Instead of the rucksack (or if you please in addition to a small light one, for articles you want always at hand) you have the cycle-bags. I have a capacious one with side pockets depending from the saddle, displacing the unnecessary tool-bag, and a smaller one in front on the handlebars. In the rear, I carry pyjamas, spare shirt, socks, collar and hankies, and the simplest toilet things, with repair outfit, map and books in side pockets—an oilskin well strap on the rear forks. In front, I sometimes carry the book I am reading and any food or fluid I buy along the way. One should take only the barest necessities and reduce weight to a minimum, after all, this is a civilized country. If using Youth Hostels (and oldsters may do this too), the new light sleeping-bag weighs only a few ounces and rolls into small compass. Cycling shoes should be fairly loose and without laces.

There is nothing to be said about machines: all the leading makes are good. Choose the lightest roadster model, preferably with chain-cover, and with change-speed gears. It should of course be the modern low-built type, so that in stopping you can place your foot to the ground; and as to height, one should be able, sitting on the saddle, to put the toes under the pedal at its lowest position. A good, all-round normal gear for men is 72, for women 65, with high and low gears for favourable or adverse gradients or conditions.

Whether one tours much or little, all cyclists should join the Cyclists' Touring Club. The excellent monthly *Gazette* and the *Handbook* alone are worth the subscription, the latter with its lists of inns, farmhouses and country lodgings all over the United Kingdom with prices clearly stated, and within range of the most modest purse. The *Gazette* has touring articles and good illustrations, and many other useful features. Besides this, the Club will help you with advice and itineraries, lend you maps, provide legal advice and assistance if necessary, has a voluntary "consular" system all over the country, will find you touring companions, obtains various special concessions and facilities at home and abroad, watches and defends cyclists' rights, and has district associations to which every member is entitled to belong without further fee and which arrange runs and other features. Above all, display of the well-known badge of three wings in a wheel admits you to the cheerful fraternity of the road, wherein, since the days when I helped organize the first, Metropolitan District Association, I have made many friends, and still do today.

I have used my bicycle, not only in the country, but also to explore that huge province which we call London and which is largely unknown to many of its inhabitants. The best time to do this is on a Sunday when business traffic is stilled and pleasure traffic seeks the country. It is wonderful how much you can learn of out-of-the-way and unknown quarters and corners of London and its fringes by leisurely, watchful ambling about its unending streets and scattered parks and woods and commons, from Hampstead to the Isle of Dogs, from Ealing to East Ham, and from Hoddesdon to Purley. After all, Epping and Hainault Forests and Burnham Beeches belong to the City Corporation, and Richmond Park alone is over eight miles round. I could write a book of my cycling explorations and experiences in London alone. Another interesting way of exploring London is by means of the cheap all-day trolley tickets, which for value should appeal to the instinct of the Scotsman.

In connection with town cycling, one may hope for the

further extension of simple facilities for "parking" bicycles in towns outside stores, meeting halls, business premises and the like, so that encouragement may be given to the use of bicycles for this purpose, thereby affording proportionate relief to motor-congestion, car-parks, noise, smell and other troubles.

Some cyclists pride themselves on never using any aid to the bicycle, but if one lives in London or any large city, this does involve much too-familiar suburban grind before getting to the country, and as I use my bicycle mainly for pleasure, I never have any hesitation in taking advantage of cheap rail-and-cycle day or week-end tickets whereby one can go out to one country station on the fifteen or 30-mile radius and come back from another, thus starting and finishing one's ride in the country and getting farther afield. A dull or hard stretch in the course of a tour can also be circumvented by putting the bicycle on rail, and there are steamship and other concessions normally available to C T C members.

My cycle-touring both at home and abroad has enriched my life with many happy and treasured memories, and I am still adding to the store. Afoot or awheel, or sometimes both combined in one tour, which may either go on from place to place, or radiate from a centre or centres, what better or more intimate way of learning the loveliness and infinite variety of the English countryside in all seasons of the year? And then there are the chance companionships of the road, the chats in inns and hostels, the unexpected encounters and experiences, even the mishaps remembered in tranquillity and retrospect, the glimpses of natural beauty, the grandeur, the lovely cathedrals, abbeys, castles and churches, and all the wonder and rich variety of the outdoor world!

MOTORING.—It may be remarked that so far I have dealt with both walking and cycling as pleasant means of getting about the country, but have not mentioned motoring, except as regards the use of country buses and coaches in touring. With motoring, the machine element enters in (for pedal-cycling is merely an

extension of walking) and perhaps it ought to be relegated to sports, but the possession of a small car has come within the reach of everyman, and motoring today is consequently a democratic pastime.

All I would like to say here is that, used rightly, a car may be almost as pleasant a means of enjoying the countryside as walking or cycling, but much naturally depends upon the manner of its use. Crowding the main roads, nose to tail, incessantly "going places" apparently simply for the purpose of getting somewhere else at the quickest possible speed, seems to me rather a form of mania or penance than of pleasure. But of course a car can be used sensibly for touring, keeping a moderate pace that allows one to enjoy the passing scene, taking to the byways rather than the high roads, stopping frequently, and leaving the car at times for rambles afoot, climbing, fishing and the like—using it indeed as an adjunct instead of a juggernaut. I have enjoyed many tours in this way, spending at least as much time out of the car as in it.

If one does much of this, it is a good thing to join the Automobile Association, which does at least as much for motorists as the C.T.C. for cyclists. The Association is always ready to help with advice and itineraries for tours, with motoring maps and lists of recommended hotels in varying grades. Personally I prefer the open or openable car rather than the closed glass box on wheels which has become, alas, so much the rule.

One can use the car also to take deck-chairs or stools and folding table for picnic meals, it can tow a small two-wheeled trailer with collapsible hood and camp-beds, rendering one independent of hotels; or of course you can hitch on a caravan.

## *Other Outdoor Pursuits*

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ALTHOUGH walking and cycling, joined with an alert interest in everything that is going on around one, or even the sense of well-being induced by exercise in the open air, are sufficiently pleasant pastimes in themselves, some people prefer to go on walks and rides "with an object," bearing in mind perhaps the Red Queen's advice to Alice always to have a "purpose." Here, therefore, let us glance briefly at some of the things one may do out of doors, apart from the sports and games which fall for mention in the next section.

The most obvious form of outdoor interest that can be cultivated on any walk or ride is termed nature study. The recognition of common wild flowers, plants, grasses, of trees and bushes and of the wealth of the hedgerow, will always lend added interest to one's perambulations in the open air, and there are fortunately many little popular illustrated manuals available which will enable the merest tyro or the most inveterate townsman readily to identify these forms of life and growth around him. There is also a great fascination in watching birds, and in recognizing their song at different seasons of the year. It is true that one's pleasure in nature is not necessarily dependent upon one's knowledge of flora and fauna, but still some acquaintance with these things does undoubtedly enrich the interest of a walk or excursion, and it is well known that countrybred people see much more in the countryside than does the townsman. It is sometimes said that countrymen by absorption in detail and familiarity with the scene tend to miss the natural beauty, but are we sure that they do, even though they talk only of prosaic things? Nature is part of the texture of their lives. Gilbert White, Mrs Mitford, Frank Watson, and many another were certainly not oblivious of natural beauty, and there is no reason why a little knowledge should not enhance our pleasure in the countryside.

Even those pent in towns can, by walks in parks and gardens, add to their nature love, especially if they can pay occasional visits to places like Kew Gardens or to the Old English gardens or other special features that are part of some of London's parks. "Still life" can be studied in the Natural History Museum and other places mentioned in a later section. It may of course be unnecessary to stress these things, since the English are said to be a nation of garden lovers, but some who have not either the urge or the opportunity to exercise this instinct can yet derive much pleasure merely from seeing and knowing flowers and trees, and it is a pity that park and municipal authorities are not a little more generous with labels giving the common names, instead of or in addition to the scientific terms, of a wide range of the lovely growing things they cultivate so carefully for our pleasure. Town children should be familiar with them from the earliest years.

Our study of nature may be either solitary or gregarious. Those who prefer company may either join or form a "field-club" in their own neighbourhood or amongst a small circle of friends with whom they can pursue purposive rambles at weekends. Sometimes, in addition to vernal nature, these clubs study the structure of the earth, or separate geological field-clubs are formed, and often such clubs flourish as off-shoots or by-products of local polytechnics, evening institutes, rambling clubs or other societies. As a means of co-operative education, combining instruction with healthy outdoor exercise, they are much to be commended.

In this connection, perhaps the study of astronomy may be mentioned, though it is not necessarily and certainly not wholly an outdoor pursuit. Star-gazing may be enjoyed on any fine night's walk, but provided you have "a room with a view" or rather, a sky, you can also study it from your own window. As a boy, I can still remember purchasing with scanty savings Sir Robert Ball's *Story of the Heavens*, then issued in sixpenny parts, and mounting and pinning up on the wall of my room the large plate of the Northern Constellations. In those days I had an old

weaver's attic to myself, with a long casemented window commanding a plentiful expanse of chimneys and spires and a wide skyline, where on fine nights I used industriously to sweep the heavens with a very small and cheap telescope. I did not discover a new planet, but I found much else both in the heavens and within myself, and awakened or deepened a sense of wonder and reverence, as a result of these solitary communings with distant worlds.

You do not need elaborate or expensive equipment to study astronomy for yourself. Much may be done even with the naked eye, but a good instrument, which with a small tripod will stand on table or window-ledge, may be acquired for a comparatively small sum. Ball emphasized the simplicity of the apparatus with which the ordinary man could take up the fascinating pursuit of star-gazing, and this country, despite its doubtful skies, has never lacked enthusiastic amateurs, many of whom have contributed notable and original work to the progress of the science. As an attractive introduction for those who have no scientific knowledge of any kind, I can recommend the popular works of Sir James Jeans, especially *The Stars in their Courses* and *The Mysterious Universe*.

Astronomy is a fine study, however simply pursued. Its very nature and subject-matter lend dignity and breadth to the background of our minds, and a spiritual depth and sense of proportion to our view of life. It should have, too, a morally bracing effect, somewhat akin to the mingled exhilaration and deep abasement which we feel when we stand in our littleness on the bare summit of a lofty mountain or upon a boat-deck in mid-ocean.

Mention of mountains naturally suggests climbing as an outdoor pursuit, though this at present is for the comparatively few enthusiasts, who are both physically fit, to some extent skilled, and have easy access to mountains. Yet it has always attracted many Englishmen who have made their ascents in all parts of the world, but even for those of the most modest ambition and no pretence to be alpinists, and for all young people out for a

strenuous and exhilarating holiday, there is ample scope for adventure, and even for high skill and daring, in the Lake District, North Wales, the Pennines, in Scotland, and in other ranges of our own island. Stout nail-studded boots or shoes, sound wind, a stout heart and a clear head are the chief requisites.

Apart from the works of nature, our excursions may also be made the occasion for studying the works of man. In this favoured land, even when the industrialist and the vandal have done their worst, there is fortunately still plenty of scope for appreciation of the past in the magnificent cathedrals, abbeys, castles, manor-houses and churches which still enrich the English scene. Fortunately, many of these have passed or are passing into the keeping of the National Trust, the Ministry of Works, or other public or municipal authorities, and are thus preserved for permanent enjoyment by the people. There are also many fine examples of domestic architecture, even of the humblest, and of market-halls, crosses and the like well worth seeing, and the villages of England offer a rich and diverse field for delightful exploration in themselves. Mention need only be made of (to name a few at random) West Wycombe, Chipping Campden, Bourton-on-the-Water, Painswick, Lacock, Castle Combe, to arouse not only vivid memories but also protests from all quarters that their favourite village is not included.

Prefaced to many guide books and in many small handbooks, there are appreciations of architecture with simple illustrations which enable the beginner easily to distinguish the different styles. In the churches and cathedrals will be found, in monument and brass, tablet and window, a wealth of records of the past history of our land. Nor is it only the past that holds our interest: many modern buildings deserve equal attention either by intrinsic merit or from association.

Which brings us to another object for excursion that may be described as "literary rambling." There are many shrines of literary and allied interest, or places and districts associated with authors or their writings, which are certainly objects for interesting pilgrimages, for example, all the places associated with

Dickens and his immortal creations, the Wessex of Hardy, George Eliot's country, Gilbert White's Selborne, the Waverley country, Wordsworth's Rydal and the Lakes, the Brontë country, Q's Delectable Duchy, and innumerable others which book-lovers will identify from their favourite authors or their characters.

It may seem strange that all these activities should be mentioned before the one outdoor pursuit that appeals probably to the great majority of Englishman, and that takes them but a few paces from their own door. Even more than shopkeepers, we may be said to be a nation of gardeners, but then no man or woman who possesses the most modest piece of ground (indeed it very often seems that love's labour is in inverse proportion to size) needs to be reminded of the claims of a garden. In town or country alike, but most of all perhaps in the suburbs that surround every large town, the average Englishman's favourite and perhaps almost his one outdoor avocation is manifest. And it is well for us that it should be so, for there is no more deeply satisfying occupation than to cultivate one's garden. It is the one thing that keeps the townsman in touch with mother earth and his native soil, for most townsmen are of country descent. The poet tells us that "a garden is a lovesome thing, God wot," but we know by instinct that it is good to be out in our own patch of earth, planting and tending living things and watching them grow. And there is the satisfaction of growing some at least of our own produce, howbeit small. Proof, if such were needed, of the popularity of gardening is afforded by the wide appeal of the weekly broadcasts on this subject, and even those without gardens do wonders with window-boxes and unpromising backyards.

But for all these reasons, it is superfluous to urge its claims here. The principal equipment after all is a natural zest, and the happy possession of "green fingers," and gardening manuals exist in plenty, from the most elementary to the most advanced, for the cultivation of everything that can be grown out of doors, to say nothing of bee-keeping, poultry-raising and so forth.

Another fascinating outdoor pursuit, which appeals strongly to all manner of people, from Cabinet Ministers to policemen, is bird watching. Birds and their ways have an attraction for all of us, and wherever there are birds in England's green and pleasant land, and not only in recognized bird sanctuaries, we can watch them. It can of course be conjoined with anything else that takes us into the open air, or be our main objective and pursuit; and there is an excellent little Pelican book on Watching Birds, listed in the Appendix, which can be commended.

Photography is mentioned under "Hobbies and Crafts."

Is fishing a sport or merely a restful outdoor occupation, an excuse for reverie or "just sitting"? Anglers will protest that it is a high vocation, but we may perhaps venture to classify this along with riding, swimming, hunting, canoeing, camping, and the rest under the heading of the next section.

## *Sports and Games*

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OUTDOOR sports and games are not to be learned from books, but by actual practice or direct instruction, and the only reason for reference to them here is to draw attention to the need for their inclusion at least in some modest measure in any balanced scheme of recreation. This may perhaps seem unnecessary, since many people, especially and naturally those of the younger generation, give a somewhat disproportionate place to sport and games in their leisure time. Others there are who give no time at all to them, except perhaps in the purely passive role of spectators of others' play. Both extremes are undesirable. There are sports and games available to all ages and conditions, and everybody should include in their repertory at least some one game, not only for pleasure and health's sake, but because games played in concert with others have their social and educational value.

As an indication of the wide range of choice open to most people, it is only necessary to name the principal outdoor sports and games, which include cricket, football and other ball games, golf, tennis, swimming, skating, fishing, riding, hunting, camping, boating, sailing, canoeing, and so forth. Not all of these are for everyman, though in these democratic days, facilities are happily increasingly available for many to indulge in sports formerly regarded as open only to the favoured minority.

More playing fields accessible to the people in London and other large cities are urgently needed, and there is a movement to encourage and increase the provision of these. Meanwhile, in the present public parks and recreation grounds, besides football and cricket, tennis courts, putting and bowling greens and other facilities are available. Lawn tennis is an excellent game for all ages and so is deservedly popular. Not being myself a golfer, I cannot speak from direct experience of the royal and ancient game, but it is obviously more expensive both in equipment and

club membership, but while it keeps many middle-aged men (and women) physically fitter than they might otherwise be, and evokes the greatest enthusiasm from its devotees, my chief feeling of gratitude towards it is due to the fact that golf-courses have preserved many open stretches of country from brick and mortar invasion.

Bowling is a gentler and more democratic pursuit, appealing also apparently chiefly to the middle-aged. Of cricket and football, both "soccer" and "rugger," it is hardly necessary to speak here, for those who actively follow their favourite sports need no urging thereto. Even those whose participation in either game is limited to the "gate," doubtless derive some benefit and excitement from watching professionals play it, but neither these crowds nor those who follow the "dogs" or even the horses, and less still those who bet on them without even seeing a game or a race, are our concern here.

Both swimming and skating are more active pursuits, and these can be indulged in either in the open air or under cover, in baths or in rinks, for either ice or roller skating. Together with a swimming bath, a good gymnasium is an obvious asset, for here every kind of physical exercise can be practised, and these are provided by municipalities and in clubs and institutes. It should be remembered, however, that in the absence of easy access to a gymnasium, or for that matter, in addition thereto, simple apparatus can be kept and used at home, even if only in the shape of a pair of dumb-bells or Indian clubs or a skipping rope, though some affect the species of "home exerciser" that can be screwed to the back of a door. A great fillip was given to this form of exercise by the "up in the morning early" broadcasts to music, but I must confess that personally I am not a great believer in the efficacy of "physical jerks" carried out more or less mechanically and by routine, and would prefer that exercise and physical fitness should come as a by-product of some natural activity in the open air, such as a brisk walk to work rather than ten minutes "exercises" followed by a belated rush for the train.

To those who are able to enjoy it, mainly of course those

living in the country, there is nothing more exhilarating than horse-riding, and for a time it almost looked as if the horse were coming back to its own as a means of getting about the country, as William Cobbett did in his *Rural Rides*, and certainly the horse and trap, with its pleasant leisurely jog-trot did find favour even in these speed-ridden days, but there is of course the difficulty of bait and stabbing and the ubiquity of motor traffic.

Another favoured mode of outdoor progression is caravanning, with its ally camping, but these can hardly be defined as sports or games, and together with boating, sailing and canoeing, may be more appropriately glanced at under the head of Holidays and Travel.

While swimming, skating and gymnastics can be done under cover, so also there are other indoor sports and games, both active, such as badminton, table-tennis, billiards and bagatelle, and sedentary, as card-playing, chess, draughts and the like. In most neighbourhoods, there are institutes, clubs and other social centres where many or all of these can be indulged, and it is a matter of *chacun à son goût*. Generally, interest in a variety is better than exclusive devotion to any one of them, for the purpose of recreation is change and the refreshment of faculties not exercised in the main business of living. Thus, those whose one outdoor pastime is golf and one indoor passion bridge would seem to suffer from poverty of resource, but since I happen to be addicted to neither, they may well retort that this is sheer prejudice.

Nothing need be said to detract from the pleasure of card games on winter evenings provided they be taken not too seriously or persistently, and that it be remembered that even bridge, despite Mr. Culbertson and other high authorities, is but a game and not a science or religion. Bridge, to its devotees, seems to have captured all "the vigour of the game" that Lamb's Mrs. Battle claimed for whist, and the latter game to have become a mere excuse for a crowded and somewhat breathless prize competition. There is after all a wide variety of card games for less sophisticated tastes that can be learned from any book of

indoor games or week-end book, and novelties are always being introduced, while older favourites, like backgammon, Iudo, Halma, etc., seem to have gone completely out.

By way of relaxation, many of my acquaintances can be as completely happy with a pack of cards for Patience, as with a detective thriller, and probably the most astonishing and widespread of inventions unknown to our grandfathers has been the immense vogue of the crossword, which has gained the countenance and support even of *The Times* and greatly enhanced the popularity of the dictionary. Certainly there is something to be said for a pastime (if it be merely that) requiring so much ingenuity and indeed erudition, but we have all known (and perhaps fled from) circles where for a time at least it has become the main preoccupation and topic of conversation. It still helps to while away train and tube journeys, and whether it will in turn descend into the limbo of forgotten things is not yet clear.

Some of us may think it is a pity in these days of mechanical pleasures and passive entertainment that old games are not more often revived which require no apparatus or equipment, other than perhaps a paper and pencil and an active mind. Echoes of "animal, mineral or vegetable" and other catechisms, and even the excitement of dressing up for "charades" still pursue me from days when people were thrown more upon their own resources to provide an evening's entertainment—which even extended to supplying their own music, vocal and instrumental, instead of listening to radio or gramophone. Though the days of family parties may not return, we may perhaps look for more co-operative entertainment in the new social centres that will arise.

Another popular game is darts, originally associated with the country pub, though it has invaded the town and the home. Whether it is a degenerate descendant of the ancient English sport of archery or toxophily, certainly those rare inns that possessed skittle alleys would look down upon it and its exponents with something akin to contempt. Many of our older country sports have died a natural death, and their attempted and somewhat self-conscious revival under other conditions, as in

the case of morris and folk dancing, has not always been too happy, though no spectator of the annual English Folk Dance festivals can deny that they still enlist much talent and enthusiasm. For much the same reason that gardening as an outdoor pursuit was left, as it were, to speak for itself, so dancing as an indoor pastime has not been specifically mentioned, since it is obvious and general, and ample provision exists.

My own favourite indoor game is chess, which offers endless resource, especially for those who regard its possibilities with perhaps experimental levity, and who are in no danger of attaining eminence in a game which far surpasses bridge in its claim to be considered a science. Besides the regulation Staunton board and men, I also possess a treasured little ivory travelling set, but unfortunately its use needs not only the occasion but the companion, for I am not one to work out chess problems for myself.

This of course is not a complete catalogue of sports and games, but only an indication of the variety available for leisure hours. Some perhaps may be considered to be on the border line between games and hobbies, and before going on to speak of Travel and Holidays, it may be as well to devote a brief section to hobbies and crafts.

# *Hobbies and Crafts*

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In our educational system so far, there has seemed to be far too little attention paid to the importance of training hand and eye as well as brain. Our schools have laid perhaps more stress on the purely literate side of education—the three R's and all that goes with them are of course important and necessary, but as an exclusive basis of education, they are likely to produce an unbalanced result. That and the greatly increased complexity and specialization of mechanical processes in modern industry have endangered and impoverished our fine inherited tradition of craftsmanship, to say nothing of its effects on the individual. Happily there are signs that this is being corrected on the educational side, and there will always be among our people a strong infusion of the "handyman" instinct and an urge to use tools for making things.

In the old days, this was largely manifested in an outburst of "fretwork" and similar hobbies which left some fearsome deposits in our homes, but today a much more practical direction is given to manual skill. Polytechnics and evening institutes with a wide range of practical classes at moderate or nominal fees are available in London and many provincial centres not only for young people but for men and women. An account of the work done in the evening institutes of the L.C.C. and the London polytechnics is inspiring, and classes can generally be started and instructors found in any subject for which there is a demand. On the women's and girl's side, there is similar instruction in domestic subjects, and throughout the country the women's institutes have made a great difference to rural life. There have been and are happily many instances of skilled craftsmen freely giving their knowledge and skill in spare time to equipping, furnishing, helping productions or teaching their fellows in their local clubs and institutes, amateur theatres and the like. Such work is its own sufficient reward.

Apart from bench instruction in various crafts, many people assiduously cultivate their own hobbies in leisure moments, and these have as wide a range and variety as men's interests. There is a journal, *Hobbies*, which caters for their pursuits, but it is doubtful whether it could ever cover them all. There is also the peculiar joy of collecting, and this is by no means limited to stamp collecting, which many of us have pursued since boyhood, and which at least has enhanced our interest in strange countries and improved our geographical knowledge, besides building up a widespread and prosperous philatelic business. My own connection with colonies has brought this very much under my notice.

There are vastly many other interesting things which, as at least every boy knows, you can collect besides stamps, and once the collecting mania gets a real hold, it can become very absorbing, and the problem is to keep it within bounds. One old friend, a member of the Omar Khayyam Club, possesses I believe a copy of every edition (an incredible number) of the Rubayyat that had ever been published, and his collecting ardour had overflowed into other fields. There are old prints and maps, there is the delight of "extra-illustration" of one's favourite authors and subjects, there is the complete collection of objects or records relating to a given locality, or a particular period, and many other, possibilities. What is noticeable about most collectors, apart from absorption in their hobby, is their quiet pride in the uniqueness or other distinguishing feature of their own particular collection, and certainly such a pursuit can give deep and abiding satisfaction, besides the possibility of enriching some local museum at the end.

Some friends took up rubbings of brasses in old churches, and the collection of epitaphs, inscriptions and other local lore, and there is one pursuit of necessarily limited appeal the active exercise of which has impressed me as a spectator on more than one occasion, and has left its traces in Thomas Hardy's novels, though alas, it flourishes far less today than of yore. That is the ancient art of campanology, or in plain words, bell-ringing, which once

attracted much rural talent, and has a queer vocabulary of its own, the ambition of the expert being apparently to ring so many "triple bob majors" with bewildering variations. (Incidentally, one of the parlour games to which in earlier days we were addicted required the participant to speak extempore for five minutes on any subject mentioned to him, and my favourite posers were campanology, conchology and toxophily.) But indeed the ramifications of hobbies and collections are almost infinite, and this brief section can do no more than serve as a possible stimulant to the reader's own interest or enthusiasm.

There is one hobby which everyone who has not already done so can take up with immense pleasure and profit, and that is Photography. The simplest camera, of the box or especially the vest-pocket type, and no more skill than suffices to focus your object and press a trigger, will adequately serve your purpose. You may have your films developed by the chemist and remain the merest tyro and yet get infinite pleasure out of it; or you may elevate it to an art, equip your own darkroom, and pursue it seriously, with colour-photography, portraiture, cine-cameras and the rest, and become Fellow of the Institute and expert practitioner and exhibitor—or anything in between. Photography can, of course, be added to walking, cycling and other outdoor pursuits, and especially travel. You can compile your own albums of tours, scenes, buildings, people and everything that appeals to you, and these will give your endless pleasure and enrich your memories.

## *Holidays and Travel*

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"TRAVEL broadens the mind" Does it? Who does not know people who have taken Brixton or Birmingham or Buffalo with them to the ends of the earth, who remain invincibly parochial whilst perpetually peripatetic, their one object being to "go places" apparently in order to say they have been there, and straightway to go somewhere else?

The truth is, of course, that travel only helps to broaden the mind already alert and eager for new experiences. What you get from anything in life is usually strictly proportionate to what you bring to it, and this holds good of reading, of friendship, of travel and most other things. To go on any journey with an incurious mind, and fixed habits and prejudices, such as many British tourists (and not only British) seem to take about the world with them, is to court sterility and disappointment, and it has had the effect of making the word "tourist" a term of reproach. I suppose the apotheosis of the orthodox holiday may be seen in R. C. Sheriff's delightful *Fortnight in September*, where the annual seaside jaunt has been reduced to as fixed a routine as the rest of the workaday year. The alternative is to treat every holiday, even the least, as a fresh adventure without precedent or rules.

There is of course one species of travel which may be enjoyed by everybody, and that is what is known as "armchair travel." Personally, I must confess that it has always been a delight to me, especially in the dark winter evenings, to settle down in a comfortable chair by the fire with a really good book of unconventional and authentic travel, adventure or exploration, giving honestly the results of first-hand experience and observation. How one may then enjoy all the hardships and disasters as your true traveller does at least in retrospect. Such books should be furnished with good illustrations and a clear map. Judging by the popularity of this branch of literature, many others also enjoy

their travel in vicarious ease I have myself quite a fair collection on my shelves and am constantly adding to them, and were I to compile a bibliography of Travel, from the great classics to the latest impression of America, including only those which I had personally enjoyed, it would be quite a volume in itself.

This taste explains the still remaining popularity of the "travelogue" or illustrated lecture, some of which I have been guilty of myself, although its field is now sadly encroached upon by the travel film. Would that the film industry would give us many more really good travel films showing, as nothing but the films can do, the life and scenery of our own and other countries and cities, in intimate detail from unusual angles, and with a really adequate commentary. For these, one would willingly sacrifice most of the "love interest" productions with which the market is in more senses than one drugged. Home television will also, it may be hoped, increasingly supplement but not supplant the delights of the good travel book.

But armchair or vicarious travel is not enough even to give an edge to its secondary joys, it is necessary to have some touchstone of personal experience, some standard of comparison, however modest, and for that and many more positive reasons, we must travel ourselves. It by no means follows that the much-travelled person is the richest in experience, happiness or wisdom, though if he has travelled hopefully and in the right spirit, he cannot fail to have enriched his life with many memories and resources, and to have broadened both his mental horizon and his values. But all of us have known examples of ripe wisdom, shrewd judgment and equitable outlook on life exhibited by people who have scarcely strayed from their native town or countryside. These, however, are nature's philosophers who have brought their innate talents to bear intensively upon the material, human and otherwise, which life has provided before their own doors, and presumably if circumstances had altered their lives and sent them rolling round the globe, they would still have extracted their own essence, if different in quality, from the experience. For most of us, wider contacts and fresh

scenes, do enrich our lives, and are in any case a joy in themselves.

Earlier sections of this book have already touched upon two methods of travel, namely, walking and cycling, and they are undoubtedly the best means of seeing both your own and other countries, intimately and at leisure. It remains here to speak of other ways of travel. So far as means are concerned, they comprise broadly railways, motor-cars, buses or coaches, ships and aeroplanes. Unquestionably we can look forward to great developments and new facilities in all these means of transport in the future.

As between home and foreign travel, I would say generally, to the intending holiday-maker or traveller, know your own country first. It is astonishing what a wealth and variety both of scenery (mountain, moor, dale, lake and sea) and of experience which these small islands will yield to those who will pursue their charms lovingly, leisurely and patiently. England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland have each their characteristic and diverse attractions to offer to those who know how and where to seek them, and they are not always or perhaps often to be found in the "beauty spot," the beaten track or the holiday resort. This, of course, is not a guide to guide-books, but there is a wealth of such literature available, from the Blue Guides and various county guides and the Highways and Byways series, to the handy little Penguin guides, and it may be added that many historic towns and other places issue guides or handbooks of their own, which can be obtained from the Town Clerk; and then there are various railway publications. It is good, as has been said before, to make due use of such aids, but it is better, with a good map and a spirit of adventure, to set out on a voyage of exploration of your own.

It is true that the great majority of people, from necessity or inclination or both, do confine their holidays or travel largely to their own country, but it does not follow that thereby they get to know it at all intimately, for too many of them still tend to oscillate between home and one or more favoured seaside or

other resorts, like the suburban family in Sherriff's novel, and never get to know even their own country. One should therefore try to make acquaintance, even if only superficially at first with as much of the face of Britain as possible, and this is best done by the walking and cycling tours recommended earlier helped out wherever necessary or desirable, by rail. Or, of course, it may be done, with discrimination, by motor-car or coach.

Thus you will know at least something of the Chilterns, Cotswolds, Mendips, Quantocks, Pennines and other hill ranges, the Sussex, Berkshire and Wiltshire Downs, the varied loveliness of the West Country, of Dartmoor, Exmoor and Cornwall, of the Peak District, the mountains of North Wales, the Lake District, East Anglia, the Norfolk Broads, the Yorkshire moors and dales, the Border Country, the Highlands and islands, and more than "in dreams behold the Hebrides." And this still leaves the subtle charms of the sister isle, the Antrim valleys and coast, wild Connemara, the lakes of Killarney, Glendalough and the Wicklow mountains, and many other lovely scenes. Here indeed is wealth in abundance, without going beyond the British Isles.

While speaking of our own country, it is appropriate to mention the work of the Travel Association of Great Britain and Ireland, a Government-subsidised body, which has entered upon a great "Come to Britain" campaign to expand its activities widely in the future, not only in persuading the peoples of other countries to come here, but in helping our own people to know their country better. In this connection, however, much will have to be done to improve hotel, guesthouse, transport and other facilities.

But desirable as it is to know one's own country first, the adventure and contrast of foreign travel should not be unduly postponed if leisure and means admit, perhaps they can be judiciously blended. Knowledge of one's own country gives one a background or standard of comparison the better to appreciate "foreign parts," and perhaps when sufficiently sated with foreign

travel, one can enjoy all the more keenly, for the wider experience, the delights of the homeland. Contacts with other peoples, customs, cities and countries are, however, undoubtedly an education of the mind and spirit, and foreign travel properly undertaken, even on a modest scale, helps one to become a true citizen of the world.

The best way to travel abroad is, if one can, in the same simple, intimate fashion that one would choose at home, namely, lightly equipped, to walk (or cycle) about other countries, journeying along the roads, staying at village inns or simple hotels or pensions in towns, mixing with the people as much as possible. This either requires much time or else greatly restricts one's scope, but it may be better to have a really intimate knowledge of one or two districts and their people than a superficial "tourist" acquaintance with several countries, though for my part, I see much to be said for both. It may further be objected that this method of foreign travel implies a knowledge of languages. Certainly, that is the only way one can get the fullest benefit from it, but English takes one a long way (especially as Basic English spreads) and it is wonderful what a few simple phrases will do, accompanied by appropriate gestures, especially if you have a courteous manner and are willing to learn and to conform to local ways, for then people will be only too glad to help you in every way.

The study of languages is dealt with in the succeeding section. A very individual book for the kind of travelling recommended here is *The Happy Traveller*, by the Rev. Frank Tatchell, a Sussex vicar who evidently had much in common with the original Walking Parson. Mr Tatchell calls his guide "a book for poor men", and indeed he begins by saying that "the real fun of travelling can only be got by one who is content to go as a comparatively poor man. In fact, it is not money which travel demands so much as leisure, and anyone with a small fixed income can travel all the time." This parson certainly practised what he preached.

Though the ideal way to travel is independently and, so to

speak, footloose and fancy free, there is no need to despise the conducted tour and the co-operative holiday. Even if you are travelling independently, there is much that the travel agencies can do for you to smooth your path, and to save you labour and trouble in struggling with time-tables, itineraries, customs and hotels. They can issue books of tickets, hotel coupons, travellers' cheques, give you advice as to routes, and generally make themselves useful. There are sturdy and adventurous spirits who prefer to do all this for themselves, perhaps even by the process of trial and error, but it is not everybody's taste, and if time is limited, this method saves much wear and tear, and perhaps even expense. To cyclists and motorists, the CTC and the AA can, of course, render much practical help and secure certain privileges.

To the tyro in foreign travel, an easy means of becoming first acquainted with other countries, a preliminary canter over the course, so to speak, is provided by the conducted tour and the co-operative holiday. Superior people affect to despise this "herd" method of travel, and certainly the spectacle of a flock or coach-load of organized holiday-makers being shepherded round the scheduled "sights" is not exactly inspiring, but still it has advantages as well as drawbacks: a certain amount of latitude is generally allowed, and within limits, it is possible to vary or extend the programme and to suit oneself; moreover, in a crowd, one or two congenial or interesting companions can usually be found. At least, one is freed from making all routine arrangements, thus leaving more time and energy for the actual tour. I have sampled several such tours, and have had some interesting and pleasant experiences and contacts.

There are many organizations in the field, the best known being of course Cooks', the pioneers, who will do almost anything for you. The Polytechnic and many other travel agencies also normally arrange tours and cruises of all kinds, and with the extension of holidays with pay, greater leisure and increased facilities, to say nothing of widely awakened interest in other countries, one may expect to see a great extension of popular

travel in the future. Of some organizations, besides those mentioned above, I can speak from personal experience.

One such body is the Workers' Travel Association, which originated many years ago in the Toynbee Travellers Club and has natural affinities with the Workers' Educational Association. The W.T.A. has now attained quite considerable proportions, owns centres in this country, arranges tours of all kinds both at home and abroad, organizes cruises, and has many developments in prospect. It is a democratic organization and is not a profitmaking enterprise, and in addition to ordinary holidays, arranges study tours and special contacts with similar bodies in other countries.

In another sphere, a somewhat similar body is the Travel Department of the National Union of Students. The N.U.S., as its name implies, is an affiliation of all the University students' unions in this country, and does much excellent work for students generally. Its Travel department normally arranges simple and unconventional holidays, and reading, walking and climbing tours for students all over Europe and elsewhere (and at home) in conjunction with similar student organizations abroad.

Another development is represented by the co-operative holiday movement. The movement in this country owes much to the pioneer efforts of Mr T. Arthur Leonard, who has told the story of its inception and growth in his book, *Adventures in Holiday-Making*. Starting in Manchester, the Co-operative Holidays Association which he founded now has its own centres in many parts of the country, in Lakeland, North Wales, the Peak District, the Isle of Wight, and so forth, and this is also true of its associated organization, the Holiday Fellowship, which equally owes its inception to Mr Leonard, and both bodies had built up extensions on the Continent.

The general principles of both organizations have been to arrange holidays on a co-operative basis, not to trade for profit, to charge moderate rates and to acquire centres (many of them fine buildings standing in their own grounds) out of surplus revenues. At these, there are hosts and hostesses and organized

programmes during the holiday season in which the guests are expected to participate. They also help in performing simple duties in the centre. Discussions, singing and other recreations are arranged in the evenings after the day's excursions, books are available, and generally a friendly community spirit is fostered, although the extent of each one's participation beyond the minimum varies, and the programmes (and centres) also range from those for young people during strenuous holidays to greater comfort and less exertion for older people. Out of season, when the centres are still open, programmes are not arranged, but all the amenities of the centre are still available. Holiday friendships thus formed are maintained by social activities of local branches during the rest of the year. Both bodies have been very successful among those who desire congenial companionship and a planned holiday in simple but pleasant and unconventional conditions.

There are of course many forms of holiday-making beside those indicated. The popularity of cruises had grown greatly before the war, and it may be expected that with the expansion of flying, taking the fast traffic, more ships will be available for cruises, and as a holiday at sea touching at various ports appeals greatly to many people, cruising will probably develop even more widely in the future. In that case, it may be possible to specialize to some extent and to cater for different needs. Not everyone desires the luxury type of cruise with its incessant organized gaiety and entertainment, some may desire quieter and more restful voyages, and on a more modest scale, such as the cruises organized, for example, by the Hellenic Travellers Club, or for that matter, by the Workers' Travel Association, though the latter were hardly restful. The one-class boats were deservedly popular.

Then the Holiday Camp, familiar in the United States, is spreading in this country. Butlins and others have many plans for their healthy conditions, sleeping in "chalets" or huts, assembling in central halls for meals and entertainments, and with many other amenities, they are to be commended, most of

all as an alternative to the old-fashioned "seaside landlady" holiday. But here again, holidays in such camps, especially the larger kind, accommodating between five hundred and one thousand people, appeal most strongly to those who are naturally gregarious in their habits. Perhaps, as the movement develops (and its out-of-door aspect is akin to Youth Hostels and other healthy forms of holiday) it may be possible to have smaller camps catering for people of quieter tastes. The various bodies already mentioned will probably enter this field too. In any case, the movement may be expected to have considerable repercussions on the orthodox accommodation hitherto provided in seaside and other holiday resorts, though the present writer remembers wistfully pleasant holidays spent in old-fashioned farmhouses, and these are still to be found.

An ideal form of care-free holiday for two or more friends often takes the form of a caravan, either fixed or mobile. Caravans may be horse-driven, of the old gypsy type, or motor-trailers of the modern "stream-lined" Eccles or other make, and they may be purchased outright or hired by the week or month. In the season, many advertisements of such are to be seen in *Dalton's Weekly* and other periodicals. Many are fixed on farms, orchards or camping sites. I have often made a caravan my headquarters for a "radial" cycling holiday, passed thus almost entirely in the open air, and they are specially convenient when situated on or near a farm where supplies can be obtained. The railway companies have let out converted railway carriages parked on quiet sidings for the same purpose, and sleeping huts are also available as alternative to caravans. It is useful, if such holidays are regularly contemplated, to join the Camping and Caravanning Club of Great Britain, since this body has many licensed sites throughout the country, and offers other advantages to members.

A further step in austerity, though not necessarily in simplicity, is to take to canvas. Camping has its enthusiastic votaries, though in this country it is necessarily subject to the vagaries of the climate. Your true enthusiast, however, makes light of wind and

rain and rough weather, and certainly camping, especially if combined with cycling, is a hardy and healthy life. Extremely light-weight tents and equipment can be obtained which can be fitted on bicycles, and if split up between two or more people, make independent camp and cycle touring easily practicable. When thus shared, the business of raising and striking tents, collecting firewood and water, or cooking on a spirit-stove, and simple washing-up, can be good fun, even in bad weather, and add zest to the holiday. The same business of preparing meals, washing-up, making beds, etc., of course confronts one in a caravan, but taken in the right spirit, it can be the best part of the holiday. This side of it is amusingly depicted in the novel by the author of *Elizabeth The Caravanner*. A modification of the motor-trailer caravan is the light two-wheel truck, which at night can be covered with a canvas roof on half-hoops to contain two beds side by side, a sort of tent on wheels—this is far less cumbrous behind a small car than a caravan.

Then there are, of course, the water counterparts of caravan and camping, namely, the houseboat or some simpler small craft, even the ordinary rowing boat over which at night a canvas cover can be erected or a tent pitched on shore. Everyone will remember in this connection Jerome K. Jerome's light-hearted *Three Men in a Boat*. Canoeing, too, has a certain popularity, or even canal voyaging, and there are always the delights of a holiday on the Norfolk Broads or rivers and estuaries, where one can grapple with the mysteries of sail.

It must not be forgotten, in planning holidays, that apart from the lure of the road, the railways in normal times offer many facilities for touring and other kinds of travel. Rail help has already been mentioned in connection with walking and cycling, but in this small and richly diverse country, served by an excellent railway system, much travelling can be done in comfort by dependence on the railways alone. An example of this was given by Naomi Royde Smith, when she wrote that delightful book, *Pilgrim from Paddington*, an experience which could be multiplied in other parts of the country.

Finally, but far from least, we come to flying. We are on the eve of vast developments in the air, which will utterly revolutionize fast travel in all parts of the globe. Even the most distant countries will be brought within easy reach. Already the Atlantic can be flown in a few hours, and it is possible to dine in London and breakfast in West Africa. Air expresses can reach Cape Town or India in a couple of days, and Australia or New Zealand inside a week. The habit of week-ending in other countries will be as commonplace as our present trips to the coast, and airfields will be everywhere.

My own first experience of the air was in 1908, when I ascended in a balloon with the late Captain Spencer, and in the first world war, I flew, though only as a passenger, in what we would now regard as extremely primitive planes with open cockpits. I have flown since in comfortable air-liners, especially in the United States, where, allowing for a small discount to which I was entitled, the time and hotels saved, and the fact that the fare was inclusive of meals and everything else, it was cheaper than Pullman travel on the railroads, much more comfortable and of course speedy, and on the whole, safer.

Flying is of course no way of seeing a country, and over long distances, it can be monotonous, but it is an exhilarating experience in itself, and naturally an unrivalled means of bridging space and time, and getting from one place to another. For some time, it is bound to be relatively expensive, but we have definitely entered the air age, and I regard as inevitable developments that will make flying popular, and bring it in time within reach of everyone.

Obviously that and cheap sea cruises will give an immense impetus to international travel on a large scale, and make far more widespread knowledge of other peoples, and their countries and customs, which will help to ensure future peace and mutual understanding. Especially do I foresee a vast development of transatlantic travel, which I trust will be a two-way traffic, so that the two great branches of the English-speaking peoples shall get to know one another more intimately; I hope

also that both our own people and the Americans will get to know the peoples and countries of the British Commonwealth and Empire far more than they do at present.

Something will be said later in this book about the habit of keeping a diary, but I cannot close this section without expressing the hope that all those who travel will keep some sort of record, even the briefest, of their experience at the time, for though no eye but their own may see them (and heaven forbid that I should advocate the mass production of travel books, much as I like the best of them), nevertheless these records in after years will always bring back the joys and even the mis-adventures of our journeyings, so that they will become a fresh delight and resource in the memory.

I should like to see a really popular Travellers' Club founded, with a first-rate library and comfortable quarters, where the members could help each other in many ways on a co-operative basis, placing their knowledge and experience freely at each others disposal, and securing many advantages, without however itself developing into a travel agency. With some like-minded friends, I had tried to do this before the war, and shall probably renew the attempt later.

## *Languages and Words*

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A NATURAL corollary of travel, at least of foreign travel, is acquaintance with other languages. It is quite true that English, with perhaps the aid of a few phrase-books in other tongues, will take you adequately over a great part of the globe, for, apart from our own Empire, which is world-wide, and the United States, some knowledge of English will be found in most countries, and it is likely to become in time the *lingua franca* of the world. That is very cheering for us, for as a nation we are not noted for our linguistic abilities, perhaps naturally, since there has been no urgent necessity to exercise them, although I believe that we are perhaps better in this field than our reputation would suggest.

The ability to ask for bed and board and direction on our way is, however, far from the sole use of other languages. Unless you can converse with other people in their own tongue, you are not likely to understand them, and you will necessarily miss much in foreign travel if ignorant of the language of the country. But even if you never set foot outside your own land, knowledge of another language is the only true *Open Sesame* to the mind of the people and the history and literature of that country, and to be bi-, tri-, or multi-lingual, even in reading, should certainly enlarge the mind. Besides, Britain is becoming increasingly cosmopolitan, and you can meet people of every race within these shores.

Finally, the study of languages is an admirable mental exercise and discipline, and a fascinating and sufficiently rewarding pursuit in itself. Probably most of us, who are by no means natural linguists, have been discouraged from trying, because it has unfortunately got mixed up with the study of grammar, which is quite a different thing, and from painful schooltime recollection of parsing and of lists of irregular verbs. Yet small children, if taken to another country or even put into the com-

pany of foreign children, pick up other languages easily and naturally and without apparent mental effort, while remaining entirely innocent of grammar, just as we, in our childhood, picked up our mother tongue long before we suspected that such a thing as grammar existed. It is like the character in Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, who had spoken prose all his life without knowing it.

Natural means of acquiring another language are therefore best. The counsel of perfection is of course to go and live in the country, where the language is, so to speak, in the air and all round you day and night, and to speak and read always in the native tongue. (The latter is necessary, for there are people who have lived years in another country and still remain invincibly ignorant of any but the merest smattering of the language, but that is their own fault.) Not many of us, however, can adopt this method, though many can, if they wish, meet and talk with foreign people in our own country. If neither is practicable, there are still many ways of acquiring a foreign tongue.

Such linguistic knowledge as I possess, I got for myself by purchasing some simple handbooks and small pocket dictionaries and learning as many words and phrases as I could, and especially by reading books and newspapers (particularly the latter) contenting myself with grasping the general sense, helped out occasionally with the dictionary, and letting much go at first. Gradually you understand more and more, and all the time you are learning something worth while, news and literature. And it is the real language, not "exercises" and grammar, which can be left to be absorbed gradually, in due time. In fact, it is the reverse of music, instead of learning interminable scales, you plunge straightway into melody, but this time it is justified, for there is no manual, but mental dexterity to be acquired, and that can only be done by use.

There are many useful handbooks and phrase books which will supplement this, and in which a modicum of grammar can be glanced at if you wish. I may mention Marlborough's Self-Taught series, Hugo's simplified handbooks, and the excellent

little "Brush-Up" series published by Dent. What always mystified me in even the best of these books is the strange nature of some of the conversations one is supposed to carry on when freshly arriving in a foreign country, and the maddening consistency with which they always avoid the obvious phrases you desperately need!

There is still the difficulty of pronunciation. The rules for this and the imitated pronunciation given in several handbooks are worth studying carefully and constantly practising by reading aloud. The golden rule is, don't be self-conscious. You will probably never acquire a pure accent or colloquial fluency, but this doesn't matter. Above all, when in the country or speaking to a native of it, use the little you know as much and as often as possible, and do it with a disarming smile. They will take it as a compliment that you are at least doing your best to speak their tongue, and in turn will do their best to help you. It is the only way to improve your knowledge.

If you are not good at strange sounds and have a gramophone, get some of the records specially prepared for the purpose and listen to them constantly. Another way of familiarizing yourself with the sound of other languages is to listen frequently to foreign language broadcasts and to pick up as much as you can. There will probably also be further developments in teaching languages by radio.

All this assumes that you are depending on your own resources, but in London and many other large towns, ample facilities exist for studying languages in company with others and under a teacher, if you feel thereby you will do better. Not only are there the Berlitz and Hugo's schools and correspondence courses, but in London the London County Council, through its many excellent evening institutes and at a school in Bloomsbury specially devoted to languages, offers sound instruction in a very wide range of languages at nominal fees. Their literary institutes take this farther and provide facilities for appreciation of the literature, art and culture of the various countries, and practice in conversation which is invaluable. Full particulars can be

obtained from the Education Officer at the County Hall. Some-what similar facilities are offered by all the larger municipal authorities throughout the country, so that whoever wishes to learn another language or languages, and it is an excellent thing to do irrespective of foreign travel, will find that ample opportunity exists. Nor is there any age-limit for the acquisition of languages, for this can be a fascinating and rewarding pursuit at any age. Is it not recorded of Cato that he began to study Greek at eighty?

Whether English, in Basic or other form, increasingly spreads over the world remains to be seen (I do not think any artificial language will serve the purpose), but in any case the importance of the other principal languages, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Italian, will not diminish, and they are the best key to other nationalities and therefore to international co-operation.

*The Fascination of Words.*—All languages are made up of words, and quite apart from linguistic knowledge, words have their own fascination. The science of language is philology; that of words is etymology, and their alphabetical arrangement and explanation in dictionary form is lexicography, but we need not mind these scientific terms, for words, their meaning and derivation, can exercise their attraction for everybody, and our own language is especially rich in materials for study. It is built up on Anglo-Saxon, Norman French, and Latin foundations, has close affiliations with these and other tongues, and has always been liberal in the matter of importations, adaptations and inventions. These last three words, by the way, are Latin. The language indeed is changing every day, and a subsidiary study of great interest is the growth and development of slang, and its eventual incorporation, together with scientific, technical, political and all sorts of other words, in the language.

Now the study of words is one that can be pursued by anybody without special aptitude or apparatus, except possibly a good dictionary, which everyone should in any case possess. Words and names, both place and personal, have always exer-

cised a strong fascination for me. Between them, ordinary words and place and personal names enshrine the history, culture and development of a whole people and land, and show their relations with other peoples and countries in the past and present. You can see the growth of English from Beowulf, Piers Plowman and Chaucer onwards in our literature, and in many parts of the country today you can trace the persistence of older and foreign forms and phrases. In our language today, you can easily discern which are built up from Saxon, Latin, French or Greek roots or sources, and it is interesting to compare our own words with those for the same thing in related languages.

Most interesting is it to look up the meanings and origin of words in a really good dictionary—one should make a practice of doing this in any case, even with words believed to be familiar, you will learn many surprising things and perhaps be led on to explore further. Few of us can possess the *Oxford New English Dictionary* (that and others can be seen in good reference libraries) but we can have the Concise, or some other standard volume, and they will be found a mine of interesting lore. When asked her opinion of Dr Johnson's Dictionary, the old lady said she found it very interesting reading, but somewhat disconnected. A good dictionary is always most interesting to dip into at least, and in case you regard all the definitions as infallible, it is well to remember Dr Johnson's answer to a lady who asked why he defined part of a horse's anatomy in a certain way—"Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance."

Then there are place-names and family names which tell us so much about a countryside or people. Sometimes personal names coincide with places, or indicate occupations, such as Smith, Baker, etc., or personal peculiarities in origin. My own name, perhaps I may mention, is supposed to have altered its termination in days when spelling was more a matter of choice or chance, and to have been originally Simnel, the name of the "great rebel" in English history, who was defeated at Stoke, from the neighbourhood of which my family originated. But

there are many curious discoveries to be made in the study of words and names.

Apart from the standard dictionaries, there are several books which will be found of interest and use in this connection, and these are indicated in the Bibliography. I would specially commend Isaac Taylor's *Words and Places*, and Trench's *Study of Words*, both issued in Everyman's Library.

# *Friendship*

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THERE IS no greater blessing in life than friends, for one includes friendship in love, which is the greatest thing of all. We pay books the highest praise in comparing them with friends—"old books, old friends, old wine"—and indeed books are most faithful friends, since they stand always ready for use and comfort, and never change, however we may abuse or neglect them. Still, they are not a substitute for human friends of flesh and blood.

Some of us are specially favoured by nature or circumstance—or both—in possessing many friends, others, through no fault of their own, have few. Too many of us, however, including even the favoured few, unnecessarily restrict our circle of contacts and possible friendships by leaving it entirely to accidents of upbringing, relationship, neighbourhood, work or the like. In how many homes throughout the country is ordinary social intercourse virtually restricted to near relations, neighbours, or school and workmates in the case of the younger members? It is indeed often left to habit and circumstances and one's immediate environment, and this may imply a narrowing of social and intellectual outlook. Really congenial friendship must sometimes be sought outside one's immediate circle.

And what of that large number of people who, under the conditions of our modern life, exist in every large city and town, cut off by the conditions of their life or work from natural contacts, or from relatives and former friends, living perhaps in lodgings, and exposed to the loneliness which is most acutely felt in the midst of crowds? They are of all ages and conditions and both sexes, these lonely ones, lonely mostly through no fault of their own (though perhaps sometimes they are contributory to it) and it is an unhappy state of affairs, harmful especially to the young, pathetic in the old and single. What can be done about it? Social relationships cannot be mass-produced at

best only the background or opportunity can be provided. It depends in the last resort on the individuals themselves.

If we were a really civilised and educated community, there would be natural and easy means of social intercourse available for all who needed it. Every community should have its recognized social centre not restricted in any way and under public auspices catering for many different tastes and needs, where facilities for meeting like-minded people would exist without being thrust upon anybody. This presumably would be the function of the Community Centres to which reference is made later but this movement is as yet in its infancy. But although these and other facilities would probably meet the needs of the majority, there are still those people of (to use a pungish term) cultured tastes who form the minority in every community and who do not make promiscuous or easy friendships. Not all of these are already endowed with congenial friends and some who are may wish to extend their circle, since new friends are always an adventure. Certain advertisements in the ' agony' column of *The Times* and elsewhere led me to suspect that there were perhaps many instances of this kind, but it is not easy to see what to do about it except on a discreet and personally co-operative basis.

There are, of course, many avenues through which one can widen one's ordinary contacts. For women, in the countryside, the Women's Institutes have done invaluable service, and the Townswomen's Guilds something, though much less, in the towns. Then there are the evening institutes for both sexes in London and other large towns: these are of course primarily for educational purposes, but they do incidentally, especially the admirable London Literary Institutes, fulfil a social function also. Always there are the recognized means of making contacts through the churches, local sports and social clubs and societies, etc., but these do not appeal to everybody.

If, however, we wish to make friends, or to enlarge our circle of acquaintance, we must do something about it ourselves. And that is true also of friendship itself: it is, or should be, an active and not a passive relationship. The richest reward and deepest

satisfaction of friendship consists in giving fully at all times the best of oneself to one's friends without thought of the extent to which it may or may not be reciprocated. Friendship, like love, is not a question of jealously balanced give and take for each individual it is a matter of wholehearted giving, an attitude which is far more likely to elicit an equally generous response. It may be this is why some people do not make friends easily—they are waiting for advances from others—though we are not all equally endowed by nature with a capacity for friendship. But if it is not natural and instinctive, it can be cultivated, and friendship, even when firmly established, should not be allowed to degenerate into habit and passivity—it should be kept actively alive.

In earlier and more leisurely days, this was done by more constant and formal social intercourse, and during absence, by frequent correspondence, but in the rush of modern life, there seems to be no time for all this, and especially has it killed the gracious and gentle art of letter-writing. That is a great pity, for as formerly practised, it was not only a pleasant exercise in itself but an art to which we owe some of the most delightful examples of intimate writing in our literature, references to which will be found in the Bibliography.

In our crowded days, and with the telephone always at hand, it is perhaps too much to hope for any general revival of this art (even on holiday the most we can usually achieve is a picture postcard), but at least we might take thought for our distant friends or those we can seldom meet, and deliberately make time occasionally to write to them more fully than most of us do with news of little personal happenings and interests that will keep our friendship alive and warm. For many years, I have thus kept up correspondence (with some difficulty in a busy life) with friends in Australia and other distant lands, and it has been richly worth while. Perhaps, with even our most distant friends only two or three days away by air, and with cheap cables and radio telephones, even this practice will lapse into disuse, but it will be a real loss if it does.

There have been movements, with some of which I have been associated, for establishing "pen friend ship" with peoples of other countries, within the Empire, between Britain and America, and even with foreign countries where the language difficulty can be overcome. School interchange letters in this way with scholars in other lands and there was the very successful movement of the Ship Adoption Society. Many older people have formed firm pen-friendships with correspondents they have never met, and it is an excellent thing to do, for not only does it draw international bonds closer, but with the rapid growth of travel facilities, there is far more likelihood of these friendships developing into personal visits and mutual hospitality. There is no reason why the method should not be extended to people of congenial tastes and interests in one's own country.

Some who later turn out to be our closest and staunchest friends are often first met in unconventional and sometimes purely accidental ways, on our travels or holidays, even by chance contact in the street or elsewhere. This has happened to my wife and myself on not a few occasions, one of our closest friends, an Australian, was first met at Tintagel in a chance conversation. So that one should not wait too much on formalities, but be ready for every encounter. Every new friend or acquaintance is a fresh adventure in human relationship, even if this does not always develop; and I am not one of those who believe it is ever too late to make new friends, though doubtless it is not so easy in later years as in youth, it is always possible and ever well worth while.

Later sections of this book will suggest means whereby incidentally we may gain new friends through various interests, in joining societies, reading-circles, drama and play-reading groups, discussion groups, travel and tramping clubs, and so forth, and in social and public service.

## *Social Service*

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So far in this book, we have been concerned with leisure activities which have been different methods of self-expression and fulfilment, through reading, recreation, travel and so forth, but the most worth-while and satisfying thing we can do with our leisure, and indeed with our life, is to devote it in part to service to others. This of course begins at home among our own people, and especially is implied in friendship, which we have just considered, but it may well extend to wider circles and interests and to the community at large. There will be later sections of this book devoted to various cultural interests, but it seems desirable not to delay further considering the many ways in which we can all, however scanty our leisure and opportunity, be helpful to others, than which there is nothing more deeply rewarding and exhilarating in life. And there are the interests and duties of citizenship, both local and national.

Many people would willingly give some at least of their spare time and energy to voluntary social service or to some form of public work, if they felt they had any particular aptitude for it, and especially if they knew how to go about it. Most of us are extremely diffident about taking on anything of this kind, feeling that we have no qualification for it, but the only way to find out whether you can do any useful work in this sphere is, on the Squires principle, to go and do it, and many of us, under the stress of war, found that we not only could do, but enjoyed doing, with others, all kinds of things that we had not suspected ourselves capable of or interested in, and doing them surprisingly well. Let us draw on this experience for peace. We can always make a beginning, however modest, and learn as we go on.

Now, what is there to do, and how is one to go about it? Well, in every neighbourhood, urban or rural, there is something that can be done by those willing to try. To take the more obvious things first, those attached to churches and chapels or

other local institutions can offer to act in some honorary capacity in connection with the various activities or societies which usually spring up about these centres. In the country, for women, there are the Women's Institutes, and in town, the Townswomen's Guilds or other branches of Women's Voluntary Services, who can always find use for helpers.

English people have a special genius for voluntary organisation of all kinds, and it should not be difficult to find some particular niche into which one's talents and interests can be fitted. But perhaps it would be as well to mention that, if guidance is sought, the National Council of Social Service is always glad to hear from people with even a little regular time to spare and a desire to do some useful voluntary work, and to put them in touch with some agency or body needing help. There may be a Local Council of Social Service in your neighbourhood which co-ordinates the various forms of social service in the area, and there is certainly a very active London Council of Social Service which can absorb far more help than it is offered. But let us name some of the particular ways in which such service can be rendered.

One of the most hopeful and rewarding forms of social service is that connected with the younger generation in the schools and in adolescent activities after school. The future lies with young people, and anything one can do in the right way and the right understanding spirit to help them not only brings its own rich reward but keeps one's own outlook fresh and supple. In the schools themselves, much can be done. If through our own children or others in whom we are interested, we just take an interest in the school work and co-operate with the teaching staff through parents' days and the like, that is something to the good, but there is scope for more active service in most schools for those who desire it.

Most schools or groups of schools have managers and a Care Committee, and work on these voluntary bodies brings one into regular touch with the teachers, the children and their homes, and offers many legitimate and natural opportunities, without

any question of interference, of being unobtrusively helpful to children, parents and teachers alike. It is work which any ordinary intelligent person can do, but everything depends for its success upon the tact and spirit in which it is undertaken. You have the help of course of the teachers and officials of the local education authority, and in London and other large cities, pamphlets and other written guidance for school managers and care committees, but nothing in the whole organisation supplies the personal touch which the voluntary warm human interest of the average man and woman can bring to the problems of school life and after. I have been a governor, manager, care and after-care committee member, and also, as a municipal councillor, member of Education and Library Committees, and although necessarily much of the work may seem rather uninteresting routine, still it makes all the difference whether it be well or ill done, and I can testify that the influence on and share in the lives of hundreds of young people thus afforded makes everything well worth while.

Moving beyond schooldays, there is the entry into work or choice of a career, and the various adolescent interests, including probably some form of further education, which fill the years up to young manhood and womanhood, and here also there is scope for valuable social service. The care and after-care committees of the schools link up with this. There is perhaps the Juvenile Advisory Committee of the Labour Exchange, which affords scope for people with practical experience of business, trades and professions. There may be a Juvenile Organization Committee, or Youth Council in the district, linking up with young peoples' clubs, evening institutes and other activities. These clubs and other bodies need adult helpers of the right sort who can stay in the background and offer advice and guidance when consulted, but let the young people take the prime responsibility of "running their own show." There are certain to be local troops of Boy Scouts, Rovers, Girl Guides, Rangers, and brigades, which would be glad of some voluntary help from older people.

In every district, there ought to be a live and active Community Centre, supported by the local authority but drawing upon the voluntary help of every good citizen, in which all kinds of local activities, educational, cultural, civic and social, would be focussed, and to which everyone in the district would naturally turn for recreation, improvement and social service. Spare time and energy, and social consciousness, could not be put to better use than in actively promoting the establishment of such a Centre in one's own district, or if happily it already exists, then in lending a hand, however modestly, in its manifold activities. It should possess a stage for repertory drama and music, a cinema for documentary and other films, social and recreational facilities, outdoor and in, rooms for meetings and discussions, perhaps a gymnasium, clinics and health services and a day nursery, and be closely associated with open-air or covered swimming bath, the public library, and other centres of municipal life. It might embody with advantage some at least of the features of the Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham, a valuable co-operative social experiment.

There is another voluntary movement in this country which offers wide scope for its members' active participation. Starting on the humblest basis with the Rochdale pioneers over a century ago, the Co-operative movement has been built up into the greatest trading organization in the country, with its own manufactories, mills, farms, plantations and so forth, and it is more than merely a trading concern, for it is also educational in the broadest sense. It is indeed an outstanding tribute to what the English genius for voluntary association can do. In practice, membership is largely confined to what are called the "working classes," but there is of course no reason why this should be so, and if the principle be sound, it seems a pity its benefits should not be extended to others. However, we are not concerned here to argue the merits or demerits of the Co-operative movement, but only to note that it offers members, both men and women, opportunities to participate in management and in various educational and social activities. Other movements which offer

educational and cultural opportunities are the Workers' Educational Association, the Adult School movement, etc. Workers' co-operation has also taken shape in numerous friendly societies, like the Oddfellows, Foresters, Buffaloes, Hearts of Oak, which, although mainly on a business basis, have also a social side, and there is too the Club and Institute Union.

A fairly recent social service consists in the excellent Citizens' Advice Bureaux which have been set up everywhere, and older than that was the work done in various districts by university and social settlements, with their off-shoots of "poor man's lawyer," clubs, classes and other social activities, all depending upon voluntary help.

There remain opportunities for social service connected with what are sometimes called the "underprivileged" classes. With more widespread social security, health services and employment and a more equitable social system, some of these will eventually disappear, but others will remain at least for some time, and appeal to our social conscience.

In youth, besides the normal happy and healthy boy and girl, there are some who, by reason of bad environment, upbringing or other disability, become juvenile delinquents or mentally or socially abnormal, and these are dealt with through children's courts, probation officers, Borstal institutions, industrial schools, etc., and though mostly these are officially staffed, there are opportunities for people of good will to help voluntarily. Every influence that can help restore those young people who, often through no fault of their own, stray from the normal path, is invaluable both to individuals and to society. The same of course applies to older delinquents, and many do quiet, socially healing work in visiting prisons, and taking a personal interest in released prisoners through various societies. In connection with the law, whether criminal or civil, most citizens are of course liable for service on juries of various kinds, and many worthy citizens, both men and women, are chosen for arduous unpaid service on the Commission of the Peace.

At the other end of life, there are the old people of both sexes

27. *Wanting means who have few or no relatives or friends to look after their needs.* The best and most natural place for old people is in the family circle if this still subsists, since it is on the whole socially good for the generations to live together more or less near and together and help and learn from one another. It seems to get rid of or to segregate old people away from the rest of the community and in forced company only with other old people is not on the whole a good thing for either young or old. But it is not always possible to avoid this and old people of course often need special care. We can, however, alleviate their lot and cheer their lives by visiting them and doing anything we can to sustain their interests, bring them comfort, and keep them in touch with the rest of the community, whether they be in their own rooms, homes for the aged, almshouses or public assistance institutions.

That reminds us that there are still many others, by no means old people suffering from the effects of poverty, illness or misfortune in need of public assistance of various kinds, which is provided by our public assistance (former poor law), hospital and other services. Quite apart from the officials, there is ample scope for voluntary social service in connection with these agencies, and beside the public institutions, there are also voluntary bodies working in this sphere. Those who desire to devote some of their time to service to their fellow-beings can learn of the opportunities that exist through the bodies that have been mentioned here, the local authorities, education committees and other channels.

Though by no means exhaustive, enough has perhaps been said in this section to show that no one need lead a self-centred life in their leisure time, but may render useful service to the community and at the same time enlarge their interests and greatly enrich their own lives. This leads us naturally to consider one's duties as citizens and possibilities of active service in public work.

# *Local Government and National Politics*

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"THE politics of the parish pump" is commonly a term of belittlement or even contempt, and yet in the complex modern community, nothing is of more immediate importance to the average citizen than the good and smooth working of his local government institutions. Parliament and the national political parties deal with wider issues, but the service and responsibilities directly entrusted to county, municipal and other local bodies affect much more closely the daily lives and welfare of the average man and woman. And yet how many of us either know or take much interest in the work or conduct of our local authority and its officers, or have any clear idea of its powers or duties, or its relation to other bodies and to ourselves as citizens? Do we ever attend the meetings of our local council or its committees, or watch the work of our own councillors, except occasionally, when feeling is worked up, to join in some ratepayers' protest and normally just to grumble when the demand for local rates is received? Yet in this country, unlike the continent of Europe and many American cities, everything is done by an unpaid body of our fellow citizens chosen by ourselves and acting on our behalf. The real responsibility, therefore, as in national and imperial affairs, is ultimately yours and mine.

When I was unexpectedly asked to stand for a seat on the Council of a large County Borough on the fringe of London, although my constituency was an exceptionally articulate and intelligent one, and the campaign was conducted with vigour, only about 23 per cent of the voters went to the poll, and there was a fair percentage of spoiled votes. This, it is to be feared, is typical, and until there is a more general interest in local government and candidates come forward from among the best elements in the community, our municipal standards will not be as

high as they might be, although, all things considered, they are on the whole surprisingly high at present, and a great deal of good, unexciting and thankless work is done on these bodies throughout the country.

It is therefore for everyone, man and woman, with sufficient leisure and public spirit, to consider whether they can render useful service to their fellow citizens on one or other of these local bodies, from parish council to county council, education or public assistance committee, or whatever it may be. Short of standing as a candidate, one can at least take an active interest in the work of these bodies through membership of residents' or ratepayers' associations, and local political branches, or through occasional attendance at public meetings of the council or committee, and reading the reports of their proceedings in the local press.

My own experience may be useful. When I stood for and gained a seat on the Borough Council, I knew no more of local government than the next man, which was little or nothing. That had to be remedied as far as possible, and an election address drafted. I am glad to think that, when the time came to resign my seat owing to removal from the district, I had carried out most of the things promised in it. I did most of my own canvassing, and this is an excellent way of getting to know something of your neighbours. A public meeting arranged by the residents' association had to be addressed by each of the candidates from the same platform, followed by a lively process of "heckling," and this also is a useful experience.

On polling day, one had to be busy about the constituency and at the various polling stations, and to be present at the actual count of votes, at the Town Hall. This was not concluded until very late at night, and then as the successful candidate, I had to propose a vote of thanks to the Returning Officer and to my helpers, the defeated candidate seconding the vote and producing some consolatory reflections to his own supporters.

The subsequent receipt of a bulky package of papers addressed to Mr. Councillor S inaugurated my term of service—I had

almost said penal service or hard labour. The first meeting of the session is mainly for the purpose of electing committees or sub-committees, upon which most of the real work of the council is done, out of the public eye. My own principal interests were education and libraries, but every councillor has to take his share of other work as well. Ordinarily committee meetings are held in private, the public being admitted as a rule only to the full meetings of the council, at which the Press is also present. Besides education and libraries, the committees deal with finance, public health, sewerage, roads, streets, and parks or recreation grounds, assessment, general purposes, and sometimes with police (through the watch committee), electric supply, water or gas, and local transport. The council and committees work through their expert officers and staff, including the Town Clerk, treasurer, borough engineer and surveyor, valuer, director of education, librarian, technical managers and so forth.

Work on a municipal council may take up as much time as an active and enthusiastic councillor cares or is able to devote to it. On such a body as the London County Council, it may well be almost a whole-time job. The work is varied and interesting, one gains useful experience of human nature in public life in the give and take of committees and debate, the permanent officials are always helpful, and one can learn much from them of the functions of a modern community. Chairmanship of a committee brings further responsibility, and this leads in due course to becoming alderman, deputy mayor and mayor.

It is always well to specialize in some particular field, while taking one's share of the general work. In my case this was, as I have said, education and libraries, and here there is ample scope for activity, especially in visiting the schools, co-operating with the teachers, and work with young people.

As regards libraries, having been amongst other things a librarian myself, I was fortunate in being able to take a prominent part in introducing libraries into the borough, securing a large grant from the Carnegie Trust, and inaugurating a new system. There is probably no municipal service which gives the rate-

paves such good value for a small expenditure as a well-run library service. I regard libraries as part of the education service, and they should of course, link up with the other activities of the Community Centre and provide lectures, reading and discussion circles and guidance in books and reading.

There are always other activities in the borough or district in which councillors are expected or enabled to take part. It is a pity that the community generally does not take more interest in local government for this would certainly have a beneficial effect both upon the councillor and upon the work as a whole, which would of course react on the community and the public services but it can be remedied in various ways. I used to report regularly to the residents association in my own district on the current work of the council submit myself to questioning, and occasionally address public meetings on municipal topics. This should be made a regular feature of the activities of a Community Centre and thus link up the social life of a district with its local government to the benefit of both. Another useful innovation would be for every local authority to prepare a lively handbook on the history and public services and administration of its area, with suggestions for public co-operation, and issue these free to every resident and especially to newcomers to the district.

Some councillors are made Justices of the Peace, and any citizen who is nominated to this responsible office has a serious duty to the community to carry out in the work of the magistrates' bench, and perhaps sometimes in the special children's courts. Local Councils nominate some of their number to serve as their representatives on County Councils or on certain *ad hoc* bodies, and this affords wider scope for public service. Then there are the public assistance committees or boards of guardians as they were termed under the poor law. These are separately elected, and though some councillors are members of both bodies, it needs ample leisure energy and public spirit to do justice to both duties. Public assistance work obviously calls for tact and human sympathy and understanding in large

measure, the spirit of "Bumbledom" is long dead in this sphere.

There are handbooks of local government which will be found useful not only to the councillor but to the individual citizen, but the best guide for the former is practical experience of his work. Enough has been said to show that there is ample scope for valuable social service in the important sphere of local government and it is one that should appeal to every public-spirited citizen, man or woman.

Local politics naturally suggest consideration of national politics, in which we all take some interest, though it is apt to be spasmodic and somewhat superficial, and emerges generally as a by-product of our newspaper and radio, and in the form of casual discussion in train, club, pub or home. It flares up at election times to die down in the intervals, unless some great public issue comes to the fore. Nevertheless, if democratic government is to survive and succeed, it must be broad-based on an alert, vigilant and educated electorate.

One way of maintaining interest in public affairs, apart from regular and careful perusal of a good newspaper or papers, and critical reflection on what one reads and hears, is to join the local branch of a political party. The party system is by no means ideal, and many of us are not what could be called good party men and women, but it is the way in which the parliamentary system of this country functions, and no better way has so far been found. It is always possible to regard party issues with a certain detachment and independence of mind, to remember that they are always subordinate to the national interest and the welfare of the community as a whole, and to exercise one's right of constructive criticism in discussion *inside* the party.

It is, however, an elementary political duty to support one's party by local membership and by attendance at meetings of the branch. These branches as a rule take cognizance of local as well as national politics, and local bodies are often run on strict party

lines, though this is sometimes of dubious advantage, since local questions are best determined on their merits without regard to a particular "ideological" angle, and personally I have often found myself ranged with members of other parties in dealing with concrete matters. On local bodies, there is indeed a good deal of friendly co-operation, and give and take across strict party loyalties, and in this fortunate country, this is not unknown on larger bodies and even in the national Parliament itself.

Membership and attendance at branch meetings keeps one in touch with public affairs, both local and national, and if these prove interesting, there are always opportunities of taking a more active part by serving on committees or doing other voluntary work in connection with party affairs such as canvassing, speaking at public meetings and the like. In this way, and through this useful apprenticeship, may be born in some cases an ambition to embark on a parliamentary career. I was once honoured with an invitation to stand as a parliamentary candidate, but I could not at that time add thus heavily to other duties. The contest would in any case have been a hopeless one, but that of course is all a beginner can expect and it is invaluable training.

Besides the party branches, there are often affiliated or junior political organizations, and in the Labour field, besides the local Labour Party, there is the valuable experience to be gained and useful service rendered in one's trade union branch, which has often led to a trade union or parliamentary career, in co-operative societies, and in such bodies as the Fabian Society, L.L.P. and the like.

Interest in politics can be stimulated by perusal of the parliamentary debates summarized in *The Times* and other newspapers, or on the radio, upon which, too, political questions are from time to time discussed by members of the different parties, or again by occasional recourse to Hansard, copies of which are available in some public reference libraries. A very good way of enlivening one's political interests, and of getting good training in debate and procedure is to form or join a local Parliament,

modelled faithfully on the mother of Parliaments at Westminster, I have held Cabinet office in such a local "legislature," and have found it, if not too onerous a responsibility, at least excellent fun!

But while active participation in the various forms of public service which we have been considering in this section may not appeal to all, at least everyone ought to take an intelligent interest as an occasional spectator in how the modern community lives and works, and that is the subject of the next section.

# *How the Community Lives and Works*

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HAVE you ever spent a morning in a police court—not in the dock, but in the seats reserved for the public? It is an experience in the summary dispensation of justice, of homely advice on domestic and personal problems, and of the drama of ordinary lives, which should not be missed. Then there is the County Court, in which a multiplicity of small civil cases are heard, and the quarter sessions. Children's courts are quite properly private, unless you have some good reason for being present through interest in particular children or in probation work.

In London, the sittings and the various divisions of the High Court of Justice (the Law Courts as Englishmen realistically call them) are of course open to the public, as are the perhaps more exciting sessions of the Central Criminal Court at the "Old Bailey," but they are seldom crowded save when some *courteuse célébre* is being tried. It is certainly not suggested that these occasions should be regarded as a public spectacle, or in the first case, even as a basis for the salutary if smug reflection "There but for the grace of God go I," nor indeed is it recommended that a habit be made of such attendances, but it is in a sense the duty of every citizen to see for himself (and herself) at first hand, the actual process of the administration of justice, and the working of the law as affecting the lives of his fellow human beings.

But this of course is only one aspect of the life of the community, and perhaps rather the abnormal side, for the great majority of us do not normally come into close contact or conflict with the law.

It has already been suggested that the average citizen does not visit his town hall or council offices to see how his representatives are carrying on their work, and this is a pity both from his

own and from their point of view. Every such local body must hold its full meetings in public, but it is seldom that the public, except for a few odd persons, is actually there. The most important municipal body probably in the world, the London County Council, holds its Council and Education Committee meetings in public, and there is always ample space in the public galleries. Much might be done by local authorities themselves, perhaps through the Community Centres, to stimulate public interest in their proceedings, and to provide regular opportunities for citizens, and especially for the younger people, to see how the various public services work, by demonstration visits to electricity stations, waterworks, and so forth.

As the supreme body of our central government, Parliament sits at Westminster, and by application for a pass to your local member, you can be admitted to the public galleries. No intelligent citizen should miss an opportunity of seeing Parliament at work, though most of the solid work is actually done in the committee rooms. If you have occasion to see your member, you can be admitted to the Lobby, and the buildings of Parliament are shown to the public at stated times.

Apart, however, from governmental, municipal and legal functions, there are many aspects of the life of the modern community which it is of great interest to be able to see at work. This applies particularly to our complex industrial structure. It is certainly true of the modern community that one half does not know how the other half lives and works, and it is always interesting to get a glimpse of the other man's (and woman's) job. Many large industrial enterprises do arrange for visits of the public to their works, and parties are often made up for this purpose by various societies, but I think there is scope and need for a systematic extension of this practice, in so far as it does not interfere with work, and that we should all benefit by seeing for ourselves how the complex machinery of our civilization functions and how the "other fellow" gets his living. It would make for better understanding between all classes of the community besides greatly extending our practical education.

Many years ago, it was part of my duty to organize and conduct parties of students round all kinds of engineering and manufacturing works and public services in this country, including bridges, railways, tunnels and many other civil engineering works actually under construction; and this experience, extending over a period of years, was in itself a liberal education and gave me many unforgettable memories, including digging out the London clay in a "shield" for a new Tube, "walking the plank" high above London river connecting precariously two arms of a new bridge, exploring London's sewers, descending in a diver's suit, going through compressed-air-locks, driving an express train (unofficially) on the straight stretch approaching Peterborough, taking a small amateurish part in all sorts of operations in various factories, foundries, blast furnaces, shipyards, etc. I would have every intelligent citizen, and especially the younger generation (perhaps even before they leave school and choose their future careers) given regular opportunities of seeing other people at occupations of all kinds and watching how everything works.

Later in this book, I may make suggestions covering this and many other interests and activities of leisure, but now, having dealt with the social services, let us look at a further group of what may be broadly termed cultural topics, including broadcasting, music, films, the theatre, lectures, art galleries and museums, and so forth.

# Broadcasting and Television

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BROADCASTING has in many ways wrought a complete revolution in the lives of many people all over the world, and with its further development, including television, it is likely still more profoundly to affect our lives at many points in the future.

To many thousands of lonely or isolated people, to invalids, to the disabled or blind, to inmates of homes, institutions or hospitals, to old people and to those cut off from ordinary communication with their fellows or other resources, it has proved an inestimable boon. It has brought all these again into the main stream of life, put them into instant and continuous touch with world events, and opened up in many cases new vistas, interests and resources which before were unknown to them. To others of us, it may appear more of a curse and a menace, with the ever-present nuisance of loudspeakers invading our privacy and shattering our peace, a horror from which there seems no escape, drugging or atrophying our minds, or propagating from morn to midnight, with much that is excellent, a too copious flow of banal and third-rate material pandering to the lowest common measure of untrained popular taste, or even cheapening what is good—*corruptio optime pessima*.

Every scientific development, however, is liable to abuse, the fault lies not in the instrument, but in our own use or misuse of it. Scientific knowledge and technical application advance more rapidly than our social skill in controlling their effects.

This is as evident in broadcasting as in many other fields, and some ill effects will continue to mix with the good until socially and individually we are able to catch up with the scientist and the engineer, and make only the best use of the powers which they place in our hands. Partly this is a problem of control, and partly of our individual use of the instrument. Let us consider the latter first.

There is an art of listening as there is of living or anything

else Broadcasting should take its due place with our other leisure activities, should be used only in proper proportion and relation to those other activities, and with the conscious intention of getting the best out of what it can give us. In fact, we have to ask ourselves, are we listeners or only hearers? Do we deliberately select only those items in the programmes which we wish to listen to and give them our undivided attention, as we would or should in a concert-room, lecture hall or theatre, or do we just turn on the radio more or less at random to fill in time or serve as a background, carry on conversation or other occupations, and give only partial attention to it from time to time? Radio "background" or indiscriminate use is an insidious evil, both negative and positive, apart from being a nuisance to others.

My own practice is to go through the *Radio Times* with a blue pencil and mark only those items in the programme for the ensuing week which I specially wish to listen to and may have some hope of hearing. In practice, even of these special items, I find I have time for only a modest proportion and sometimes even the best have to go by the board owing to other demands on my time. I never turn on the radio at other times, and I listen to the news normally once a day, in the evening. What sort of items do I mark? Well, any really outstanding musical programmes, such as symphony or "Prom" concerts, favourite musical pieces, sometimes on good gramophone records, especially piano music, really interesting talks or discussions, and all good plays, sometimes special "features," though these with caution and discretion; nothing of jazz, bands, variety, comedians, sport, or second and third-rate music or singing of any kind. Naturally, selection will vary with the individual. Everyone to his taste, but be sure you have a taste, and know why.

Once I turn on the radio, I give it undivided attention. That is not to say that someone engaged in light occupations not demanding special attention, or a housewife occupied in domestic tasks, may not enliven them with pleasant music, but generally speaking, anything listened to with partial attention must lose

much of its value and prove largely a waste of time. This applies particularly to listening to music, but as we shall be considering music in the next section, it need not be enlarged upon here. The prospect of having to give concentrated and individual attention to what we listen to should have an excellent astringent effect in limiting and heightening our use of radio.

After all, there are only twenty-four hours in the day, the greater portion of which for most of us has to be passed in working, eating, sleeping and some outdoor exercise or travel, therefore, if we are to order our leisure sensibly, listening, however active and intelligent, must take its place with other interests. This may seem too obvious to mention, were it not that in some quarters there is a tendency to spend too much time with the radio, which is not good, apart from engendering a reaction. The temptation is all the more insidious since the set can be taken about with one and fitted in cars (a practice especially rampant in America) and this constant accompaniment of background distraction cannot but be harmful on balance. Even at home, listening is in necessary conflict with reading, for there is nothing more to be deprecated than the habit of turning on the radio as a background to any reading worthy of the name. The only result is that both are spoilt.

Assuming, however, that we keep radio in its due place, where it can of course be a serious cultural influence, there remains the manner of our listening. This is a matter of social conscience and behaviour. In the early days of broadcasting, we had to wear earphones, and this not only assisted and in some measure compelled concentration on the broadcast, but caused no disturbance or distraction to others, even in the same room. From some points of view, this is an ideal way of listening, but of course it anchors the listener, unless apparatus could be devised that needed no physical connection with the receiver, and even then presumably we should find it irksome. So it seems there is nothing for it but the loud-speaker, with emphasis, it is to be feared, on the adjective.

What can decent people do about this? If uncontrolled, it is

likely to prove, has indeed already proved, a menace to peaceful existence in urban, and even in smaller communities. Especially is it difficult in blocks of flats, which are an increasing feature of life in large towns. Obviously, we can each control our own radio, and so use it that it need not become a nuisance to our neighbours. Instead of letting it blare forth at full strength, or against open windows or out of doors, the volume should be modified so that it need not be audible beyond the room.

Doubtless, with the constant march of technical improvement, our present loudspeakers and sets will be eliminated, and we shall get our audible programmes through the telephone or lighting circuits or in some other way, and volume can be controlled from a centre, but whatever is done in this way, much will still be left to individual discretion and good behaviour, and this is mainly a matter of social education.

So far, we have been speaking mainly of aural radio, but television has made such vast strides that we must assume that in the future radio in the home will be both aural and visual. This introduces new considerations. What effect will the popular development of television have upon our social habits, and upon the cinema and the theatre?

Well, in the early days, the Press was somewhat nervous of the effect the full development of radio might have upon the sale of newspapers. So far, the effect, especially in moments of public excitement, has been to increase the sale of newspapers, and there is not the slightest likelihood, as far as can be seen, of radio superseding the printed word. Similarly, it was predicted that the cinema, especially when it emerged from the early silent to the "talkie" stage, would inevitably kill the theatre, and certainly for a while the theatre, especially in the provinces, had a bad time; but it began to revive and develop on the repertory side, and it was seen that its future lay largely in its own hands. Now, presumably both cinema and theatre are "threatened" by bringing the audible screen into the home, but again it may well turn out that it will only have the effect in the long run of

strengthening both, just as the universal diffusion of radio music has strengthened attendance at concerts.

Although we are not concerned with broadcasting generally, but only as it contributes to individual leisure, there are one or two aspects of it which have a general public interest. In this country, broadcasting is a public monopoly, it is technically controlled by the Post Office, which collects the annual license fee, but the "instrument of supply" is a public utility corporation acting under a Parliamentary charter. In America, broadcasting is a commercial enterprise, though amalgamation and some measure of control by wave-length has modified the original free-for-all competition; programmes are mainly sponsored by advertisers, there is a multiplicity of radio stations, and of course listeners pay no license fee. Each system has its advantages, but as this country is unlikely to go over to the commercial system, it may be useful to consider in what way we can improve our own.

Monopoly has its responsibilities and its drawbacks. It needs both a corrective and constant stimulus. Within the organization this could be achieved by decentralization and by introducing a large measure of regional autonomy, encouraging the regions to emulation and to compete against one another, at the same time bringing out the best features and peculiar genius of each locality. Then the programme staffs should be changed frequently and not allowed to grow stale, they could be changed about the regions, or sent abroad, and even allowed "sabbatical" periods for "refresher" purposes. There should be a constant influx of new ideas and talents, and nothing should be allowed to get hardened or stereotyped. Real alternative programmes should be presented to suit different tastes, and in this connection, something needs to be said about methods of ascertaining the public taste.

In its early days, the BBC was enterprising, adventurous and courageous. It led public taste rather than followed it, and broadly speaking, this is the best way to raise the popular standards. It had the courage of its convictions (and it had convictions of its

likely to prove, has indeed already proved, a menace to peaceful existence in urban, and even in smaller communities. Especially is it difficult in blocks of flats, which are an increasing feature of life in large towns. Obviously, we can each control our own radio, and so use it that it need not become a nuisance to our neighbours. Instead of letting it blare forth at full strength, or against open windows or out of doors, the volume should be modified so that it need not be audible beyond the room.

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strengthening both, just as the universal diffusion of radio music has strengthened attendance at concerts

Although we are not concerned with broadcasting generally, but only as it contributes to individual leisure, there are one or two aspects of it which have a general public interest. In this country, broadcasting is a public monopoly, it is technically controlled by the Post Office, which collects the annual license fee, but the "instrument of supply" is a public utility corporation acting under a Parliamentary charter. In America, broadcasting is a commercial enterprise, though amalgamation and some measure of control by wave-length has modified the original free-for-all competition, programmes are mainly sponsored by advertisers, there is a multiplicity of radio stations, and of course listeners pay no license fee. Each system has its advantages, but as this country is unlikely to go over to the commercial system, it may be useful to consider in what way we can improve our own.

Monopoly has its responsibilities and its drawbacks. It needs both a corrective and constant stimulus. Within the organization this could be achieved by decentralization and by introducing a large measure of regional autonomy, encouraging the regions to emulation and to compete against one another, at the same time bringing out the best features and peculiar genius of each locality. Then the programme staffs should be changed frequently and not allowed to grow stale, they could be changed about the regions, or sent abroad, and even allowed "sabbatical" periods for "refresher" purposes. There should be a constant influx of new ideas and talents, and nothing should be allowed to get hardened or stereotyped. Real alternative programmes should be presented to suit different tastes, and in this connection, something needs to be said about methods of ascertaining the public taste.

In its early days, the BBC was enterprising, adventurous and courageous. It led public taste rather than followed it, and broadly speaking, this is the best way to raise the popular standards. It had the courage of its convictions (and it had convictions of its

own) and it gave us many good things and set a high level on the whole, to which the public responded, until it began to get nervous, to pay too much heed to sectional interests and attacks, and to lose its original faith and enthusiasm. Losing belief in itself, it began to try anxiously to find out "what the public wanted," instead of giving it really good stuff and trusting to the sure growth of public appreciation. "Listeners' research" was set up, and although this may do some incidental good, it is only too likely to result in approximation to a "least common denominator" of public taste, by relying too much on statistics and on the vocal minority, without allowing sufficiently for the silent majority. Besides, broadcasting should always keep somewhat in advance of the average level of popular taste.

Indeed, there is a danger in all these public utility corporations that the interests of the "consumers" may not be properly safeguarded. Producer and consumer interest cannot properly be combined. It would probably be in the best interests of the public and of the BBC itself if a minute fraction (say a farthing) of the license fee be taken to subsidize a *Listeners' Association* entirely independent of the BBC and directly responsible to the listening public, which would hold a watching brief for listeners' interests and especially for constantly helping to raise the level of public taste.

In any case, it is the duty of the listener, not only to make the best possible use of his listening time, but constantly to press in association with others for progressively higher standards in the broadcasting programmes.

# Music

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MUSIC is a world in itself it is a separate and universal language with its own immensely rich content and appeal No art can be translated in terms of another art So far as the senses are concerned, both painting and literature appeal primarily through the eye, while music appeals through the ear, but all appeal directly to the mind and spirit It is sometimes said that literature appeals to the mind and music to the heart, that its message is purely emotional and not intellectual, but this is a false antithesis and all true music-lovers would reject it To some indeed music appeals more powerfully than literature and the visual arts, while others, including many great men, are virtually tone-deaf, or like the majority, have but an elementary appreciation of music, and no knowledge of its technique

Sir W H Hadow, in his wise little introduction to *Music* in the Home University series, has the following trenchant passage. "By a strange obliquity of vision, many people hold that the full enjoyment of music is compatible with a complete ignorance of its structure, its vocabulary and even its alphabet Among the subjects which commonly engage our attention there is one, and one alone, of which a man will assert with pride that he knows nothing of music alone, he will assert with a flourish that he is wholly unacquainted with its history, its aesthetics, its principles of composition, and that he cannot read the characters in which it is written There are even amateurs who write to the newspapers and declare that they (or more modestly, their friends) are possessed of an exquisite sensibility to music which would be crushed like a butterfly's wing if they overlaid it with the burden of exact study that music 'speaks to the heart, not to the head,' to use their favourite phrase, and that our pleasure in it is blunted or weakened by any understanding of its methods "

Many who do appreciate good music and would like to know

more of it, say they have no time to study it, but the elements of music are no more difficult to learn than any other study, appreciation grows steadily with understanding, and there is nothing which more richly and lastingly repays our trouble. Apart from Sir W. H. Hadow's little book, which should be read by all who wish to know more of music, there are other simple handbooks on "How to Listen to Music," but granted such elementary knowledge, the best way is continually to listen with all our attention to the admittedly great compositions, on the radio, on gramophone records, and above all by seizing every opportunity to go and see it performed.

The English, in spite of what is sometimes alleged to the contrary, are undoubtedly a musical nation. We had a great musical tradition in the past, which for a time suffered eclipse, but has now grown up again to full equality with that of any other people. We are entering not only into our own rich heritage, but in our appreciation of the world's great music, we lag behind none.

Before the days of broadcasting, the gramophone had done much to diffuse the knowledge and appreciation of good music, and its contribution is still of the greatest importance. The advantage of the gramophone record is that one can gradually build up a library of one's own favourites in all kinds of music, and play them whenever one is in the mood to hear a particular piece of music instead of being dependent on the chances of the radio programme, and replay them at any time to one's heart's content. Circulating libraries of records also exist to supplement our own resources. For those who cannot do this, however, broadcasting does now give excellent and frequent selections of all classes of gramophone music.

Broadcasting has certainly done an immense service in diffusing a knowledge of good music among all classes of the population, large numbers of whom had little opportunity of ever hearing it before. There are still music purists who say they cannot listen to "canned music," but in spite of its inferiority to a direct programme (which to some also contains elements of

distraction) the majority of us who are amateurs in musical appreciation have good cause to be grateful for the opportunities and pleasure given us by broadcast music. A great deal of third and fifth-rate stuff is also broadcast, it is true, and it may be said that, even as regards good music, there is danger of its being cheapened by its being laid on too frequently or used as background, but the remedy in both cases is in our own hands. As to the inferior stuff, the only effective remedy is the education of popular taste, and the pressure of intelligent public opinion on the broadcasting authorities. As to "cheapening good music," we should never of course turn it on as a mere background, but only when we are prepared to give it the full attention which it deserves, and we can never become too familiar with good music if we treat it as seriously as we should Shakespeare or other great literature.

So far, we have been considering only the appreciation of music, but there are of course two broad aspects of music which react intimately upon one another, and may be called the appreciative and the executant. One cannot fairly define these as the passive and the active, for appreciation, to be of any real value, must be active and concentrated, just like the critical appreciation of great literature or visual art. But assuming that we have learned the alphabet or notation of music and something of the structure of its principal forms, it is likely greatly to enhance our positive pleasure and delight in music, besides sharpening our understanding and appreciation of the art, if we can ourselves play some instrument.

The small boy derives exquisite pleasure (his older auditors may think quite disproportionate to the performance) from his execution on a penny whistle or a mouth organ—at least that is the beginning of music for him. So with more serious and mature students—if we can learn to master some instrument for ourselves, we shall have a far keener interest in the appreciation of music as a whole. In the days of the aspidistra and the anti-macassar, and the institution of the front parlour, it was a point of honour and social convention that this apartment should

contain, where possible, a piano, and that someone, usually the small daughter or daughters of the house, should be compelled, irrespective of any discernible talent or indeed despite pronounced antipathy, to practice regularly upon what became for sensitive neighbours an instrument of torture. The reign of the piano in the parlour was largely abrogated by the advent of the gramophone, which proved perhaps only an exchange of evils; but although we do not wish to go back to those days, at least they showed not only an awareness of music, but an ambition, often misplaced, to make it.

So, while for many of us intelligent appreciation of music must suffice, and is in itself an inestimable resource, let us by all means extend the number of those who also make music, even in the simplest ways, not as a social convention, but as an active pleasure, so that England may really become a musical nation again. The first step is to learn about the different musical instruments, which everybody should do whether intending to play one or not. There are little handbooks which illustrate and explain the various instruments in an orchestra, and the part which each contributes to the whole, but in any case the best way is, of course, to go and see them in action. In London and other large cities, and even in many smaller places, there are ample opportunities for doing this. London in particular, with its "promenade" concerts, its many concert halls and societies, its excellent orchestras, its chamber music concerts and organ recitals, even down to music in the parks, offers abundant choice of opportunities for seeing music of all kinds performed, and the large provincial cities have also their great musical traditions. One should take every chance of seeing music performed and thus of learning the interplay and function of the various instruments, but short of this, much is done on the radio to teach musical appreciation and instrumental function, both in the general and in the school programmes.

From this it is a short step to learning to play oneself, even if one's chosen instrument is the modest flute, mastery of which, however, as of any instrument, is a considerable art in itself. One

may then either make up a quartet for practice in each other's houses, an activity which has given lasting quiet pleasure to many people, not only in towns but in the villages and the heart of the country, or join a local orchestral society or band Choral, operatic and orchestral societies are social and musical organizations which engage many peoples' leisure in the pleasantest manner There are no doubt drawbacks to musical practice in the household or neighbourhood (especially if the instrument chosen is the trombone or the double bass) but much must be forgiven the enthusiast for the sake of the resultant harmony Surely no more harmless or pleasant association of human kind can be imagined than for the purpose of making melody

For those who cannot face the lengthy and difficult art of mastering the piano, much satisfaction can be derived from a pianola or player-piano There is also that even more formidable instrument, the organ, and I have had several enthusiastic organists among my acquaintance, who at least have been able to get ample church practice

One form of music is open to all of us who possess any ear for music at all, and that is singing One may have no more than an ordinary natural voice, and derive very much pleasure (even if this is not shared by all one's auditors) from exercising it We should all indeed sing more it is a good thing in itself Even the most unmusical of us are moved to sing in the bath, but there should be much more both individual and collective singing Although the superior affected to despise it, community singing deservedly became and should be again a popular movement, and the English as well as the Welsh should be notable for their singing There are many admirable collections of songs that can be sung by all, students' songs (the BBC has done much to popularize these), old English and other national traditional songs and airs Many of the Victorian ballads, even the sentimental ones, and some of the real old music-hall ditties, are worth collecting and singing One could easily make a list and repertory of the best of them, adding some of the tuneful numbers

from Gilbert and Sullivan and other favourites "Sing-songs" are not such a feature as they used to be, and yet they might be practised, with an improved and extended repertory, more often with advantage. We shall not go back to the Victorian drawing-room custom, when everyone was expected to bring their "music" and be persuaded with infinite apparent coyness and reluctance to sing or play, but the practice of singing spontaneously in the home and in unison is a pleasant one and should not be allowed to die out.

Being blest personally with what I gather is an ordinarily pleasant natural voice, though entirely untrained, I have not hesitated to use it, and at least have given myself a great deal of pleasure. A man or woman who sings freely and spontaneously, if only making a cheerful noise about the house or at work, is not likely to be unhappy or misanthropic in disposition. The value of singing and music has been amply proved in the factory and workshop, and perhaps it may become more prevalent out of doors in the future, without imitating German regimentation.

Movements like the English Folk Dance Society, founded by Cecil Sharp, which encourages not only traditional native folk and morris dances, but also music and song, deserve wide support. I have often attended the annual festival, at the Albert Hall and many rehearsals and performances at Cecil Sharp House, London, and allowing for a certain degree of self-consciousness and artificiality perhaps inseparable from such movements, there can be no doubt of the intense pleasure and release which these afford to the thousands who take part in them and spectators alike, or of the valuable service they perform in keeping alive and strengthening our rich national tradition and heritage, or even of their international significance in bringing together different peoples in the harmless and pleasant enjoyment of song, music and dancing. A musical England is likely to be a "merry England."

## Films

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MANY statistics have been published showing the astonishing growth of the cinema habit in the few decades since the introduction of the film, and solemn enquiries and speculations have concerned themselves with the probable effects of indulgence in this habit on adult, and especially upon juvenile audiences. Most ordinary urban families or their individual members seem to have formed the habit of going to the cinema, irrespective of what is shown on the screen, about once a week or even oftener.

The section devoted to Broadcasting and the Cinema in the *New Survey of London Life and Labour* refers to the fear often expressed of the growing influence of mechanized organizations as tending not only to foster the habit of passive receptivity of entertainment at the expense of the more active and energetic pursuits of leisure, but also possibly to establish something of the nature of a dictatorship of amusement and even of opinion. On investigation, however, it was found that, over the period covered by the enquiry, active pursuits had also greatly increased, and the conclusion was reached that "the human spirit is unlikely to be satisfied with the passive reception of impressions through the ear and eye, but will continue to crave, possibly with even greater intensity, some more active means of self-expression." Well, this is very cheering and let us hope it is true, though the danger of indulging in too much "passive reception" of anything is obvious.

Film-going as a social habit is the development of but a few decades, but in that time, like broadcasting, it has become practically universal, and in the same period, the film itself has made great strides at least technically. Most older people remember the early cinemas and the days of the silent film. The first revolution was the coming of the "talkie," and now we shall have available televisionized pictures direct to the screen, a great extension of colour and stereoscopic projection and other im-

provements. What influence these developments will have upon the cinema as it is today, and upon broadcasting on the one hand and the legitimate theatre on the other, remains to be seen.

From the point of view of a well-balanced leisure, the film is but one element amongst many others of possible entertainment and cultural value, and our concern is only to learn what we look for from the screen, and what is the best we can get from it in the time which we want to devote to the cinema. As with the theatre and the concert-hall, we should go to see a particular programme and not merely as a habit to pass the time irrespective of what is on the screen. If most film-goers were consciously to adopt this attitude towards the cinema, the standard of film-making would undergo a profound revolution. Obviously we should make the same demands and expect similar standards from the film as from broadcasting or the theatre, or from any other art. If a sufficient number of the intelligent public will insist on the best films of every kind, and will go to the cinema only when and where these are available, we shall get what we want, either through the industry, or our own co-operative effort, in film societies, or through both.

This country, to say nothing of the Empire, is especially rich in the best kind of film material, in the daily lives of its people, in its varied scenery and historic past, in its industrial and other activities, and most of this material is still very largely neglected. Various industrial and public undertakings are now putting out excellent short and "documentary" films suitable for public showing, and much more can be done in this field. The work of the Crown Film Unit, which began as the G P O Unit, under the able direction of Mr. Grierson, is an example of what can be done to produce first-class films, many of them comparing very favourably with the most expensive productions of Hollywood or British studios, and able to pass successfully the box-office test even under present commercial conditions. The wartime Ministry of Information also produced good work, though much of this was necessarily propaganda. Some account of what has been done at the best in both the commercial and the "repertory" fields is given in recent books on the film, for example, in Dr.

Manvell's Pelican volume *Film* (which also gives a list of other books on the subject)

Other countries, notably Russia, have shown what can be done in the successful and indeed exhilarating treatment of what at first sight might seem intractable or unexciting material. We are much more abundantly endowed, and yet, we let it largely run to waste while giving support to large expenditures on artificial and tawdry stories turned out from Hollywood and British studios under the so-called policy of giving the public what the industry believes the public wants—that is, catering for the lowest common measure of mentality and taste. It rests with the film-going public to alter this state of things.

The best way to start is to form a local film society. This can be done by the initiative of a few enthusiasts in any district with very modest resources. Dr. Manvell in his book above quoted explains how to set about it. Once a local move is made, it will be found there is plenty of help available. Usually, the local cinema manager, if he is an enterprising and intelligent person, is only too glad to have clear indication of what his public wants, and if a sufficient number of them want it, he will be found responsive to their demands, so far as his contracts admit. If the film society can get sufficient local support, arrangements can be made to hold a repertory performance in the cinema, say on Sunday afternoons, and in assembling programmes, there is now fortunately a wide choice, which will steadily expand with the constant accumulation of material and increased public demand for good films.

The British Film Institute was founded in 1933 to foster and help local film societies and intelligent filmgoers, and to build up the National Film Library, films from which are available on loan at modest rates. All local societies should be affiliated to it for a guinea annual subscription, for which they will receive at all times expert advice, assistance in selection of films from the Library and from other sources, and the periodical and special publications of the Institute. These are very useful and can be obtained separately by individuals interested. In addition to the National Film Library, there is the Central Film Library kept at

the Imperial Institute and incorporating Empire, G.P.O., Crown and Ministry of Information films, a rich and growing collection. The Film Centre also exists as consultants on documentary films, and produces a quarterly Documentary News Letter, which enables one to keep in touch with this large and fertile field of film production. Commercial and other bodies, such as Shell, British Commercial Gas, British Instructional, Gaumont-British, Pathescope and others, produce and rent many films suitable for repertory programmes. A stock is also held by the London Film Society, the premier body of this kind. -

As Dr Manvell says "A well-organized film society is one of the greatest pleasures obtainable and a definite addition to the social life of any community from it can branch out all types of cultural activity." It is to be hoped that the Community Centres which one hopes to see set up in every district will all include film equipment in their amenities, but there is still much that the commercial cinema can do to co-operate in this movement, the growth of which is bound to have a beneficial effect on the standards of the industry.

Many schools already have substandard film projectors, and all schools should be equipped with them, for the film can play an important part in education, if properly handled. Its intelligent use would certainly train a new generation to appreciate and demand a much higher standard in the commercial cinema, quite apart from the influence of television and the growth of the repertory movement.

There are of course already some cinemas which specialize in repertory programmes, such as the Academy, Studio One and others in London, and we may expect their number to be added to in our time.

If all these influences could be concentrated and co-ordinated in a national filmgoers' association, working in conjunction with the British Film Institute and other bodies, and recruited from the ranks of local film societies and intelligent filmgoers, we should soon have in this country a cinema and film industry worthy of Britain and the Empire.

## *The Theatre*

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THE theatre has existed for well over two thousand years since the days of ancient Greece, and after its temporary extinction on the fall of the Roman Empire and its rebirth under the auspices of the medieval Church, it has passed through many vicissitudes, with alternate periods of glory and décline, even to decay, but threatened men and institutions live long, and the theatre, as the vehicle of drama, corresponds to some permanent need of the human spirit. In our own day, it has been threatened with the competition of the cinema, and of broadcasting and television, but still it survives, and even revives under the stimulus of these other media.

The drama, like literature and music, is, I venture to think, an essential ingredient in any intelligent person's leisure, or art of living, and the best way to appreciate it is to see it acted by living actors on a physical stage, as did the citizens of ancient Greece and those of London in Shakespeare's day. If we are unable to go to the theatre, we can still hear, and see, plays through the medium of broadcasting and television by our own hearths, but as with radio music, this is but a substitute for, or complement to the real thing, though excellent in itself. There are three constituents in the theatre—the play, the actors, and not least important, the audience, physically present and inspiring all on or behind the stage by their response. It has been so since the days of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, down to Shaw. What would happen if plays in future were only acted before the microphone and televiser, as films before the camera, happily there is no need to enquire, for the theatre is not dead yet, but on the contrary, is probably on the eve of a still greater flowering.

Theatre-goers today are more fortunate than those of the later Victorian period when the art of the theatre was in the doldrums before new life was breathed into it. I was just of an age to see that revival, and though in my home the theatre was

looked at askance as being more a snare of the devil than a source of edification. I did manage as a youth to make my first exciting contacts with the world of the stage. I have been an ardent and regular theatre-goer ever since, in my earlier days, mostly, and still not infrequently, for the sake of good company, from the elevation of the "gods" or the back of the pit. Since those days, the theatre, despite commercialism and the competition of other attractions, has improved in many ways, and especially, the repertory movement has spread far and wide.

Those who live in the great cities, especially, of course, London, can easily, if they will, enjoy the theatre, but for residents in the smaller towns, the villages and the countryside, it is not so easy. The remedy may be partly in their own hands, as even some small villages have proved. It lies mainly in the extension and strengthening of the repertory movement, and the formation of local societies or circles to support it. There is ample talent available.

Every community centre, town hall or village institute throughout the country should be able to provide a stage sufficiently equipped to allow adequate if simple performances of good plays. A great opportunity was missed in the last revision of the Public Libraries and Museums Acts to insert a simple clause giving local authorities permissive powers to provide facilities and support for such performances, but this can be remedied when new centres are available and local administration overhauled. The theatre should be as legitimate a part of local life as that excellent institution, the public library.

Repertory companies should be interchangeable or organized in regions or teams, so that their combined resources should cover any given area more effectively, as has been suggested by Mr St. John Ervine and others. A great deal of interesting and suggestive material on this subject will be found in an admirable report issued some time ago by the Board of Education on the Drama in Adult Education, which will be found eminently readable despite its official form.

The future of the theatre lies in large measure with the reper-

tory movement, not only in itself, but as a stimulant to the recruiting field for the professional stage—not that the repertory theatre is not partly professional also, but it has room for amateur talent. The British Drama League exists to foster this movement and to help the art of the drama generally. All local groups and societies, as well as individuals interested in the drama, should join the League, which is able to assist them in many ways, in regard to the production of plays, properties, fees, expert advice, the circulation of copies of plays, and so forth. It has an excellent library and issues a journal. It also arranges national competitions in the production of plays, and its work has also an international aspect.

There are many play-producing societies, and a number of repertory theatres in London and the provinces, and the Arts League of Service maintains a "travelling theatre" which tours the country. Many villages have their own acting groups and there is a Village Drama Society whose work covers the countryside. Plays are often performed in the Women's Institutes. Particulars of all these activities are given in the report on the Drama in Adult Education already referred to, but it would be a good thing if this survey undertaken nearly twenty years ago could now be brought up to date. The C.E.M.A. and E.N.S.A. organizations have done much good work under war-time conditions, and these and other activities should be continued and extended in the future.

The movement for a National Theatre progressed so far as to secure an excellent site at South Kensington, and it seems a great pity that this was afterwards deemed unsuitable. The function of the National Theatre is not to compete with the commercial theatres in the inner West End of London, but to set up a public which would be nation-wide and even international, who would resort to the Theatre wherever placed, and from this point of view South Kensington was sufficiently central and in other ways suitable. Unofficial "national" theatres like the "Old Vic" and "Sadler's Wells" did not suffer from being in the Waterloo Road and Islington respectively. A National Theatre is unique-

tionably desirable, and merits State assistance, but the great thing is to have a live, active drama movement throughout the country, manifest in every town and village, of which the National Theatre in London, the Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford, and other institutions would be merely symbols and off-shoots.

My own experience in London could doubtless be paralleled by that of many other lovers of the theatre both in the metropolis and in many provincial cities where there was an active repertory movement. Apart from the ordinary theatres, I remember with especial pleasure the admirable enterprise of the Lena Ashwell Players at the Century Theatre at Notting Hill, the St. Pancras People's Theatre, the Tavistock Little Theatre, the Embassy at Swiss Cottage, the Q and Richmond Theatres, the Mercury and many other little theatres in town, besides, of course, the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells. Earlier memories are of the Literary Theatre on the Hampstead Garden Suburb, of Everyman, of the Barnes Theatre before it became a cinema, and other repertory movements in the outer suburbs. A courageous and successful venture, in view of our variable climate, is the Open Air Theatre in Regents Park. I have seen Greek plays at such unlikely places as the Holborn Empire and the Chiswick Variety Theatre. Miss Nancy Price also organized a People's Theatre movement, and there were other interesting experiments. Many of these are, alas, things of the past, but I am confident that they will be repeated and extended in the revival and expansion of intelligent interest in the theatre which is bound to come in the future.

A simple practice which I can cordially recommend to all playgoers as likely to bring them much pleasure in later years is to preserve all their theatre programmes or play-bills. I have kept most of mine, though I am afraid by no means all, but even so, I have a collection of some eight hundred or so extending from the beginning of the century. This does not represent all my visits to the theatre, nor of course does it include the large number of excellent broadcast plays I have listened to, but the collection, such as it is, has given me many happy memories.

and has interested many friends. Recently, I arranged them in order of date by years, numbered them all in one sequence, and produced an index under the titles of the plays which enables me to see at once when I saw a particular play and to turn up the original programme. I keep them all handily in box-files on my bookshelves. Not only the particulars and the castes of the performance, but also the advertisements on the earlier programmes are today a matter of curious interest. Many, of course, also contain contemporary photographs of actors and actresses. With the memories summoned up by these programmes over a period now not far short of half a century, an interesting book could be written. In any case, I can promise that the practice of keeping play-bills will give to the theatre-goer an added pleasure when in the future he may wish to recall his experiences. As an aide *mémoire*, it would often be an advantage if managements printed a brief synopsis, or at least some indication of the play, on the programme, together with the date of presentation.

There is one way in which lovers of the drama, especially those not within easy reach of the theatre or unable for any reason often to go there, can maintain their active interest in it and give themselves much quiet enjoyment, and that is to form amongst their friends a play-reading circle. It may be quite a small one without restricting choice of play, since parts in reading can if necessary be doubled or even trebled. If the circle is affiliated, at a modest fee, to the British Drama League, sets of the play chosen will be sent for reading, and advice given as to choice. A private reading of a play by a circle is of course not a performance, so there is no question of a fee. The play may be either read straightforwardly in the ordinary way, or members of the circle may wish to impart some measure of dramatic rendering into their "parts"—in this way latent talent is sometimes discovered, and a circle has been known to develop into an acting group. Alternate, or occasional, meetings can be devoted to the discussion of the plays read. In any case, a play-reading circle is a very pleasant social, and even intellectual resource either in town or in country. I can testify to this from

personal experience, having formed one which in a short time grew quite beyond my ability to keep up with its activities.

As I have said, interest in the theatre or the drama in some form is a desirable and indeed essential part of one's leisure, and I have no fear that the cinema or broadcasting will in the long run do otherwise than strengthen this fact.

The new Arts Council of Great Britain (successor of wartime C.E.M.A.) has much scope for beneficent activity in this and related fields.

## *Art Galleries, Museums, Lectures, etc.*

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In the introduction to this book, reference was made to the wealth of public possessions of the ordinary citizen, especially perhaps those who dwell in or near a metropolis like London or one of the great provincial cities. Bernard Shaw was quoted as speaking of the palaces filled with treasures, well warmed and lighted and expertly staffed, and the many delightful parks, gardens, and estates which he possessed, in common with the rest of the community, whose equal discriminating use of them did but add to his own enjoyment. As a citizen of London and an active traveller about my own country, I certainly have all these riches in *excelsis* and take every possible opportunity of enjoying them.

Let us look at some of these resources for our leisure. If I do so primarily as a Londoner, it is because I can thus speak from personal experience, and there are about ten million other people in or within reach of London, not to speak of visitors, but some of my suggestions apply in varying measure to other cities, and some things touched on later in this section are within the reach of everyone.

The resources in London alone are almost limitless and extend not only to the great national collections but to many less known places, such as the Dulwich Gallery, the Jeffrye Museum, Hogarth's House at Chiswick, the Bethnal Green Museum, Leighton House in Kensington, the Horniman Museum, Carlyle's House, the South London Art Gallery, and many others. This is no place to catalogue London's "sights," but they may be found in any good guide to the metropolis, such as Muirhead's Blue Guide and the London Transport Guide.

The practice of having guide-lecturers at the principal art galleries and museums is an excellent one and might be extended

with advantage. Their talks and expert knowledge are a great help to the ordinary uninstructed visitor in enabling him better to appreciate the value, significance and variety of the treasures contained in these collections. The talks and tours are either general, embracing the whole collection, and forming an admirable introduction to it, or deal with special periods or departments in detail, and are sometimes arranged in series. With the wealth of material available for instant illustration, these informal talks are really both educative and a stimulus to further interest and study. The lecturers are always ready, moreover, to answer questions. I know one lady, who, in years past, taking systematic notes, derived great benefit from attending regularly the series of lecture-tours given by the two lecturers at the British Museum, who were, moreover, always helpful and courteous in answering her questions and giving hints for further study. The foundations of a sound knowledge of special fields, with the opening up of new interests, may be laid in this way.

The principal galleries and museums themselves also publish many admirable guides to their collections, often illustrated, at modest prices, and these can be studied with advantage. They also produce a wide range of photographs, many in colour, of the more outstanding pictures, sculpture and other exhibits in the galleries, and it would not be a bad notion to form a collection or collections of these, which being for the most part of uniform postcard size, could be kept in card-index boxes. The Medici Society also issue similar cards, mostly of masterpieces in foreign galleries. These cards lend themselves to purposes of study, and as artistic reminders of the originals, would be constant sources of pleasure in the home.

As a basis of intelligent appreciation of art, it may be helpful to read such books as R. C. Wili's *How to Look at Pictures*, or Sir Frederic Wedmore's *Painters and Painting* in the Home University Library. There are several others of the same kind.

Before leaving the metropolis, it may be useful to suggest that one pleasant means of exploring its resources more fully would be to join one of the societies which periodically arrange

tours or visits to places of interest in the London area, for in thus way one may see places not ordinarily accessible to the general public, such as the halls of the City Guilds, some famous private houses or collections, public services, industrial works, etc. It goes without saying that there are many interesting things to be seen in other cities, and I have especially pleasurable recollections of the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh and of the fine collections in Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and other cities.

Not are the crowded treasures of this small island to be found only in galleries and museums. What finer pilgrimage could be imagined than a tour of the magnificent cathedrals and abbeys of Britain, to say nothing of unnumberable fine churches throughout the land, even in the smallest villages, which epitomize the religious and artistic aspirations and even the social life of centuries, and there are in addition the historic buildings, stately country mansions and other places of interest under the care of the Crown and the National Trust, reference to which has been made in earlier sections.

Then there are the numerous parks, pleasure gardens and estates under public control which offer many opportunities for enjoyment and even instruction. Many of these parks and gardens, especially in and near London, have special features of their own. There are the great Botanic Gardens at Kew, of world-wide fame, with their special collections and museums, which afford the widest range of national study of plant, flowers and tree life under the pleasantest possible conditions, as the present writer can testify, having inhabited a house immediately outside the gates for some years. Some parks, like Battersea and Golders Hill, specialize in old English gardens, the Botanic Society's gardens in Regents Park in roses, and there are other individual features. But there is one simple thing that urban authorities might do more generally, remembering the comparative ignorance of natural things prevalent in town populations, despite the English love of gardening, and that is to display more labels giving the familiar, rather than the scientific, names of

flowers, plants, trees, etc., in their parks and gardens. It is a good thing that these are being increasingly used for outdoor performances of plays, pageants, dancing and music, for despite the uncertainty of the English climate, it has been said with some truth that one can spend more days outdoors in England than anywhere else, and everything we can do to encourage the habit benefits the national health. We have not been able to adopt the continental habit of open-air cafés, but at least we can increase and improve the provision for simple catering in parks and open spaces, not only in summer, but round the year.

But what of the winter evenings? Apart from galleries, museums, concert-halls, theatres and cinemas, other possibilities exist. Although we are not so lecture-minded as the Americans, a far wider public than ever before is alert and curious about many topics. The Army Education scheme and experience during the war has had far-reaching effects, and my own experience in lecturing to service and civilian audiences has convinced me that if a subject is brightly and straightforwardly presented and questions answered ("brains trusts" have popularized this) audiences may be relied upon.

In London at least there is ample provision for public lectures of all kinds, the various university colleges and other foundations give them, there are university extension, W.E.A. and other facilities, and not least there are the admirable evening institutes of the L.C.C., especially the Literary Institutes, which exist to provide every cultural opportunity for which there is a sufficient public demand, lectures of all kinds, art and music appreciation, plays, discussions, and various social activities—in fact, they aim to provide a kind of popular university for all adult Londoners, at nominal fees and do remarkably good work. Besides these, there are various debating and literary societies and mock Parliaments, and where these do not exist, it is always possible for like-minded people in a given area to get together and provide them for themselves. I know quite small villages which maintain flourishing societies and guilds of this kind; and in addition to their own talent are able to pay expert lecturers to

come and talk to them from time to time. Some of my pleasantest experiences have been associated with such societies. Reading and discussion circles can always be formed on a modest scale to meet in one another's houses. There are also the opportunities provided by the National Adult School Union and the Co-operative Guild. Some of these things have been mentioned in earlier sections, but there need be no lack of pleasant occupation, whether in town or country, summer or winter, for one's evenings or other leisure time.

In great urban centres like London, there should be further development of lunch-hour lectures or talks, and of poetry and other readings. The great popularity of the wartime lunch-hour concerts at the National Gallery inaugurated by Dame Myra Hess shows that there is always an audience for such ventures. There are of course lunch-hour services and organ recitals, and one can always spend a profitable half-hour at a picture gallery if within reach, but more might be done to bring pictures, talks, etc., to local town halls and to large factories.

# On Keeping a Diary

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SOME are born diarists, some achieve diaries, and some (by far the greater number) have diaries thrust upon them, but do not keep them. Injudicious relatives and friends present these handsome morocco-bound volumes, especially to younger people, round about the New Year, but their virgin pages are rarely sullied beyond the first week or two in January, if at all.

There is a very amusing story in the *Grub Street Nights Entertainments* of a man suspected of keeping a diary. He was a bachelor in easy circumstances, with nothing to do, and being continually urged to take up something, he one day dropped a vague remark about a diary. This got magnified, and it began to spread about that this quiet inoffensive nonentity was in reality another Greville, secretly chronicling the life of his time. He began to be asked everywhere and to receive extraordinary attentions. Well-known people sought him out and appeared anxious to confide in him. After a time, indiscreet Society ladies began to press him for just a peep at the famous diary, but he was always evasive. In the fullness of time, he died, and Society at large almost held its breath while his trustees met in solemn conclave. There were several large locked volumes of the Diary. The first was opened and was found to contain—some meteorological observations for a few pages, and then—nothing. The other volumes had never been used.

You may not have the same experience, for diaries seem to be taking their place with the many other books of the making of which, according to Ecclesiastes, there is no end, but all the same, keeping a diary is good fun, when you have got into the way of it. The present writer is by no means a born diarist, but although writing is his daily trade, some score of large quarto volumes and a number of pocket-size ones have already accumulated, comprising probably well over a million words. Yet it consists of only the briefest possible objective record of things.

done, entered up at odd moments in a busy day, though sometimes unavoidably at longer intervals. Already it is intensely interesting to browse over in retrospect and is sometimes practically useful, but its reminiscent value will greatly increase with the passage of time. One's only regret is that it did not begin sooner.

Published examples abound for our guidance. The late Arthur Christopher Benson kept a daily diary from 1897 until his death in 1925, and in that period wrote nearly four million words, in addition to all his other work. A selection from it has been published. Henry Crabb Robinson and Edward Pease, among others, were still keeping diaries when over ninety. Most of us know our Pepys, but staid John Evelyn and lively Fanny Burney probably not so well, and many of us have been enjoying the homely chronicles of Parsons Woodforde, Kilvert and others, while we have heard of, if we have not read, the political and social memoirs of Greville and Creevey, of which very readable abridgments exist. Two contrasting examples are Barbellion's *Journal of a Disappointed Man*, and Grossmith's ever delightful *Diary of a Nobody*, in which we all recognize the truth to life of his immutable suburban creation, Mr Pooter. Journals and diaries may be much the same thing, as in the case of those of John Wesley and John Woolman, or in a different category, Swift's *Journal to Stella*. But let me recommend anyone who thinks of keeping a diary to get Lord Ponsonby's volume of selections from *English Diaries* (or his smaller volume on *British Diarists* in Benn's sixpenny-series) and in particular to ponder the introductory chapter to the larger book, dealing with what may be termed the philosophy of diary-keeping.

There are of course many motives for keeping a diary, but a large element in it is simply habit. Certainly unless a habit is formed, the diary is not usually kept, but once formed, it soon becomes a pleasure. There is naturally a certain amount of egotism in the proceeding, but as Lord Ponsonby wisely observes, the diarist may not be ostensibly egotistical. In fact, having a private safety-valve for egotism, it is more probable that a

diarist may show less disposition outwardly to be egotistical than the non-diarist, who has only the ordinary opportunities of personal intercourse to display this common human weakness.

At any rate, why not try keeping one, and see for yourself, after the first difficult period is over, what good fun it can be? It is best not to have a printed affair with a fixed space for each day, but to get a plain-ruled quarto manuscript book, rule a margin down one side of the page and put your dates there. Then the entries can be either two lines or two pages, as the need, mood or leisure direct. There are only two rules: Be regular, and don't be too ambitious. Until the habit is securely formed, it is best to make an entry, even of the most formal kind, every day; later, "blank" days can be safely skipped, or a week or longer period summarized in one entry, although this is a dangerous practice, and is not exactly "cricket," since the essence of a diary is that the events are recorded as they happen, without knowledge of what may follow. As to ambition, this too often sadly "o'erleaps itself" in diary-keeping and brings on disaster. Better to begin with the briefest and most objective jottings, eschewing all comment, until you feel strong enough and have time and inclination to venture further, than to begin on the grand scale, recording all your thoughts of men and things, only to collapse utterly in a short time.

Diary-writing is the freest of all arts, and may be practised by anyone. There are no rules, no models need be followed, no style observed. Even grammar is not necessary, and the order and structure of the work are provided by the calendar and the daily round. All that is necessary is to be simple and direct, and put down just what is in your mind and on the end of your pen. Though no other eye may ever see it, your diary, besides being a pleasant and useful habit in the present, will become a great treasure at least to yourself in later years. I hope to keep up my practice until the end, and may then have equalled or even surpassed A. C. Benson's output—a terrifying prospect!

It has been said that everyone is capable of writing one good book, and that is, in one form or another, the story of one's own

life, although actually, and perhaps fortunately, comparatively few produce it. A diary is often the foundation or raw material of an autobiography, although when, for other than personal reasons, I ventured to essay the latter, I did not in fact draw upon my diaries at all. If any reader has the ambition or temerity to produce an autobiography (and the humblest of us like Woodforde or Kilvert may, perhaps unwittingly, achieve an illuminating social commentary) let him first try some of the best-known examples of the art, for unlike diary-keeping, the writing of a good autobiography is as much a work of art as the production of any other book. If you are not daunted after reading, for example, the vivid memoirs of that picturesque scoundrel and great artist, Benvenuto Cellini, the autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin, of Gibbon, the historian, or John Stuart Mill, the philosopher, the frank and robust confession of the novelist, Anthony Trollope, or the queer, explosive and dramatic self-portrait of R. B. Haydon, the painter, who will be remembered more for his autobiography than his art and who ended both by his suicide—to name only a few, then nothing will deter you, and you may produce something worth while. Eminence is less of a guarantee of readability than sincerity.

While I am on this subject, let me refer again briefly to a sort of sister art, what E. V. Lucas called "the gentlest art," that of letter-writing. I have mentioned it already under the section "Friendship," but what better way of filling part of one's leisure than by writing to one's friends? It has become to-day, under the pressure of modern life and the existence of telegraph or telephone, almost a lost art. We no longer live in the leisurely and spacious days of the Paston letters, or of Dorothy Osborne's charming epistles to Sir William Temple, or of the letters of Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, Cowper, Charles Lamb and many others, but in these days of international friendships and of air-mail flashing to the ends of the earth in a few days, we might do worse than cultivate the gentlest art anew.

# The Gentle Art of Doing Nothing

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HAVING read so far in this book, my wife, its first reader, feeling somewhat overwhelmed with the multifarious activities recommended, suggested that, in some slight measure to redress the balance and to complete the tale, I should insert a section on the art of doing nothing, a pursuit which, in the intervals of a busy day, she greatly favoured. I have already, in the introduction, admitted its charms and its re-creative influence (every devotee of angling, most contemplative of persons, would agree), but it has its rightful place in the business of lives. We are all the better, like the soil, for lying fallow—so here goes!

But what can be said about the art of doing nothing, except that it is an art, an integral part of the zest for life, that it draws its greatest charm from alternation with sustained and strenuous employment, and that it cannot be taught? The prescription for it is just—to do nothing, one of the most difficult things in the world apparently for many people. Idlers cannot achieve the art; they are merely, as they foolishly say, killing time; your tramp is apparently a perfect practitioner of the art, but to him there is no virtue in it, since he knows nothing else. Life is made up of contrasts and compensations, and it is the busy man and woman who can, if they will, best practise the art of doing nothing.

Unless they can do so, they may well blunt the edge of their zest for life and lose some of its precious salt and savour. Nobody yet died of overwork, but there is a condition known to engineers of oversoaking the material until it passes the elastic limit, and the same is true of human beings. Unchecked concentration upon one's work may induce a condition of nervous strain which, apart from direct harm, impedes and vitiates the work itself. In these days of constant hurry and distraction, there is all the more need to urge the claims of rest and quiescence.

- There is much to be said for a "sabbatical" period in every working life such as is granted to some fortunate professors and teachers. In their case, it means one in every seven working years to fill as they please, with travel, research, special studies, and the like. But to the generality of us it might mean a very brief period in every working year or so, not so much to do nothing as to do something else and quite different from our working life, for there is much virtue in a change of occupation. Perhaps the new adult residential colleges will provide this opportunity for the majority.

The art of doing nothing has, however, its own positive rewards, apart from base utilitarian considerations.

"What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare!"

And there are few things more satisfying, and perhaps in the deepest sense more profitable, than to spend a long summer morning lying on one's back on a grassy upland staring at the sky. As Richard Jefferies says in *The Story of My Heart* "It is enough to lie on the sward in the shadow of green boughs, to listen to the songs of summer, to drink in the sunlight, the air, the flowers, the sky, the beauty of all. Or upon the hilltops to watch the white clouds rising over the curved hill-lines, their shadows descending the slope. Or on the beach, to listen to the sweet sigh as the smooth sea runs up and recedes."

Elsewhere in that remarkably prescient book, Jefferies says outright: "Idleness . . . is a great good. I hope succeeding generations will be able to be idle. I hope that nine-tenths of their time will be leisure time, that they may enjoy their days, and the earth, and the beauty of this beautiful world, that they may rest by the sea and dream, that they may dance and sing, and eat and drink."

Of the village elders, it was said that "some sits and thinks, and some just sits," and it may be the part of wisdom sometimes to emulate their peaceful and contemplative example. To none do such occasional periods of passivity come with such quiet

pleasure and refreshment of the spirit than to the normally busy man or woman, all the more to be enjoyed and appreciated for the rarity. In this flurried age, we need more practice in this difficult art than in any other.

Tchekov has said that "Life does not agree with philosophy; there is no happiness without idleness, and only the useless is pleasurable," though this is going too far. But I am free to confess that the periods in which I played truant from school, and with my companions in delinquency, roamed London freely, and had many adventures, remain more vivid in my memory and probably taught me more than many a long session in school. Finally, I would commend to my readers, if they feel the need for some antidote to many employments, R. L. Stevenson's charming *Apology for Idlers*, which is a far more eloquent plea for the art of doing nothing than any poor words of mine can compass.

Thus, although this forms the last section in the book before it is brought to a conclusion, the art to which it refers, though, alas, no instruction can be given in it, is by no means the least important ingredient in the enjoyment of leisure.

## *Conclusion*

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It is time to make an end. I am under no illusion as to the limitations of this book. Its modest purpose has been merely to suggest to the reader various ways in which he or she can fill their leisure usefully and enjoyably. There are doubtless other ways, and with the co-operation of readers, any deficiencies can be to some extent remedied in future editions. It does not pretend to provide a recipe for happiness. Happiness is not a direct objective, but a by-product of the art of life, and in any case depends very largely upon the individual. R. L. Stevenson once impulsively exclaimed

"Life is so full of a number of things  
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings!"

Putting aside the question whether kings *are* happy, which seems extremely dubious, to thinking people the mere contemplation of the wonder and beauty and infinite variety of the world, and the great adventure of humanity, should be enough to fill us with profound happiness and gratitude; but it does not follow, because life or the world is so full of a number of things, that our own lives should be filled with a ceaseless round of activities. In that way, the wood will certainly be obscured by the trees, the end lost in the means. Thus, of all the activities and interests suggested here, everyone will make his own selection, and may be reminded that they do not all have to be pursued at the same time. On the other hand, if it be objected that, however one may wish to do many of these things, there is no time for them, the answer is that if you really want to do them, you will make the time. Incidentally, I had not the time to write this book, but it seems to have got itself written. That is, after all, how most things get done that men and women really want to do. It is not the time but the will to do them that matters.

There is one subject which has not been touched upon explicitly in these pages, but it is perhaps implicit, even if unrecognized, in any conscious desire to make rational and profitable use of our leisure time. If we feel such a desire, it is because we either have or are striving towards some kind of working philosophy of life. To many doubtless this will naturally be provided, at least as a background, by their religious beliefs. But to others, and perhaps even to those within a particular communion, the actual conduct of *this* life is a problem deserving of serious thought. We are more likely to make the best of our daily lives if we are guided, however unconsciously or instinctively, by some rule of conduct or code of values, and while the Christian ethic sufficiently provides this for many of us, everyone would be the better for at least some study of Philosophy.

I am not suggesting that this should be carried far, or that it should be pursued to realms beyond the comprehension of the average intelligent layman, but despite the dictum of the gentleman who informed Dr Johnson that he also "had tried philosophy, but somehow, cheerfulness would keep breaking through," a modest course of reading (and thinking) in philosophy would be an excellent form of "mental stock-taking" as recommended by Arnold Bennett.

In this field, the ancient Greeks have still something of the utmost value for us today, and I would strongly urge, as a minimum, some acquaintance with Plato and Epictetus, as well as with Marcus Aurelius. Fortunately the ordinary man can get the cream of Plato's thought in a small volume by Sir Richard Livingstone in the Oxford World's Classics, and for years as a boy I used to carry round with me pocket editions of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius in the Temple Classics, but they can also be obtained in Everyman and other popular series. These are the indispensable basis of any philosophic reading, but of course you can add, say, Aristotle, Lucretius, Cicero and Seneca, also obtainable in cheap editions.

Apart from the three first mentioned, however, I would

suggest perusal of a good introduction to philosophy, such as Clement Webb's *History of Philosophy* in the Home University series, or Dr. Joad's excellent introduction, *Philosophy*, which can be commended to the average man and woman. Herbert Spencer's *System of Synthetic Philosophy* is not much regarded nowadays, but I have found his *First Principles* an invaluable aid to the process of mental stocktaking already referred to. Of the moderns I would like to commend William James's *Papers on Philosophy* in *Everyman*, which I have found very helpful, and a good little introduction to Bergson, the "philosopher of change," by Wildon Carr. Bertrand Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* in the Home University Library, and his *Conquest of Happiness*, are statements of an individual point of view, and the books by Lecky and Avebury, mentioned in the Introduction, fit in here.

I own myself to have been much attracted to Field-Marshal Smuts' philosophy of Holism, but this may be going unnecessarily far into the subject for ordinary purposes, since the object here is not wide or deep reading, but simply to find the materials out of which we can fashion for ourselves an individual Philosophy of Life.

The books named above, and others which I have found personally useful, are listed at the end of the Bibliography.

I am convinced that this question of the use of leisure is one of the most important that can occupy our attention both individually and collectively. As we continue to improve our social organization, including the means of production and distribution, and as science, with ever increasing acceleration, extends our mastery over the forces of nature, conquers disease, and places in our hands more and more powerful means of fulfilling all the wants of mankind with less and less human effort, we shall all be presented with an abundance of leisure. Unless our social education keeps some sort of pace with these technical and scientific advances, we shall be faced with the same calamity in the cultural field as a similar disharmony and time-lag pro-

duced in the economic and political spheres, even to the verge of the destruction of civilization.

It is therefore everybody's highest duty both to himself and to the community to make the best use of the increasing leisure with which life and the growth of knowledge is presenting us. It is a moral and an educational problem. Very largely it must be solved by each individual. I am not in favour of the regimentation or organization of leisure. As in religion, too much organization might kill the spirit. Despite this, however, much could be done unobtrusively to make the varied facilities for the rational use of leisure better known and more easily accessible to the majority of the people. A book of this kind can do something to assist those who already feel the need or desire for planning their leisure, but these at present, one fears, form only the small minority amongst us.

In every district, therefore, both urban and rural, some attempt should be made to bring to the notice of the people generally the importance of leisure and the facilities which exist locally for its rational enjoyment. Local authorities can do much by the provision of community centres, educational facilities and the like, and indeed without such centres, social and cultural life is necessarily handicapped, but this is only the beginning or groundwork. Granted some such provision, or even for the time being in its absence, it is best in this country to look to voluntary effort to tackle a need of this kind. At the risk of appearing to contradict what I have said above about the organization of leisure, I am inclined to favour the formation of a Leisure Society, not indeed itself to attempt to "organize" leisure, but rather to promote its fullest use and enjoyment by all men and women and young people throughout the country, by bringing the various means and facilities that exist under their notice, by encouraging them in every district to engage in spontaneous local activities, to form clubs, circles, etc., especially to bring them into touch with social organizations of every kind, so that a greater number would be encouraged to render service to the community, to encourage travel and friendship,

to give support to community centres and to all movements and organizations which assist the cultural and healthful use of leisure. There are many ways in which such a society, if run on the right lines, could do useful work, mainly perhaps through local Leisure Councils, in encouraging the better use of leisure and bringing together people of congenial tastes to form local circles and putting them into touch with institutions and organizations in the various social and cultural fields.

Whatever may be thought of these possibilities, I hope at least I may have done something in these pages to make my readers think more practically about this problem of Leisure, and to do something about it individually and with their friends. Those who have done me the honour of reading this little book (and I hope in their own rather than a borrowed copy), if they feel they have benefited in any way, however slightly, may usefully turn themselves into missionaries and persuade all their friends and relatives, young people and others, to get it too—not (primarily, at least) for my own or my publishers' benefit, but because it is really important that everyone should give some serious thought to the use of leisure, if only through reading these suggestions.

If any of my readers have further ideas, suggestions, or experience to contribute to the common pool, I hope they will communicate with me, so that at least future editions of this book may be made more useful and complete. Thus we can make a beginning ourselves in one of the most important tasks that lies before civilized society.

# *Appendices*

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## I—SOME PERSONAL EXAMPLES

Most people like to know how other people live, and so, to illustrate and reinforce this book, I have thought it desirable to collect a few diverse personal examples of how actual though anonymous people use their leisure. I hope, with the co-operation of my readers, to be able to extend this appendix in later editions of the book.

### A HOUSEWIFE ON LEISURE

As every one knows, a busy housewife has very little of that commodity, apart from which I believe, with the late Gordon Selfridge, that there is no fun like work. My chief interest is in cooking and dietetics, which largely satisfies any creative urge I may possess, and if I am lucky enough to achieve extreme old age, I shall always be tottering into the kitchen to try out new recipes. I have a fairly large collection of cookery books of all countries and cannot resist adding to them. A housewife's work and leisure tend to overlap perhaps more than any other occupation, but there is this to be said for it, that much of it can safely be left to the automaton of the body, leaving the mind free to wander at will—in this way I have been able to think out and arrive at conclusions on many interesting questions. As nobody, alas, will allow me to sing near them, I often find myself repeating poetry, and some prose, that I have memorized, and so lighten the routine tasks of housework, which under present conditions I am doing all myself without help.

Dare I confess in these days of communal life and exhortations on all sides to develop our social and civic consciousness that I have never, perhaps to my shame, taken an active part in public service, although I am proud to number among my intimate friends many fine women, including housewives, who have added these duties to a day already full. I too have a stern social conscience, but my philosophy of life tends to be individualist, and always for me the approach to humanity is through the individual even though I admire my more gifted sisters their objective outlook and wider approach.

Apart from human relationships, the love of poetry, sculpture, nature, books and the theatre have been the things that have most enriched my leisure. I have been a member of the Poetry Society for many years and have spent happy hours at its meetings hearing poetry beautifully spoken. The Society has maintained a high standard, even through the

war years and the days on which its journal appears are ted-letter ones to me. In America, too, I found poetry takes a high place in that country's many cultural interests. Never has the need of poetry in one's life been greater than at present to counteract the effect of this mechanical age, and I know of no greater pleasure than to escape into the country with a volume of favourite poems. I have many precious memories, such as reading Wordsworth's poem in Tintern Abbey itself, and others read at times of personal bereavement. Do we not all love poets who express what we ourselves feel, yet "lack the accomplishment of verse"? As Robert Lynd reminds us in his superb introduction to the *Anthology of Modern Verse*, the function of poetry is to make the life of man more full and real.

I am often unimpressed by the underlying unity of some of my interests, especially in my love of sculpture and nature. My interest in the former began by repeated visits to the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum, and these lovely sculptures have been for me a permanent standard and criterion. I have not seen much of the world's great original sculpture, therefore have had to be content with reproductions, but even these are a joy, especially a rare collection I possess of the work of Mestrovic, who interprets so finely the spirit of his country. I have felt it one of the great deprivations of the war years that both our sculpture and our paintings have had to be hidden away. I enjoy great paintings, too, but sculpture has always come first with me.

From a very early age, walking has been a great pleasure to me (even when it was unusual for women to tramp the country alone) both for the joy of the exercise and the spirit of adventure. Although I have tried both cycling and motoring tours, I enjoy walking best. I delight to walk in London to observe and take part in the human pageant, and my holidays I prefer to spend in walking. Before the war, when one was sure of accommodation, however simple, I used to put on a rucksack and adventure forth, going on from place to place, arriving each night at some country inn or cottage and deciding to stay awhile, but always in the morning feeling the urge to be on the road again. Outside my own beloved country, I have never been a great traveller, except of the armchair variety, although I know a little of France and something of the United States and Canada. I have always known that I should find all races and colours around my own fireside, and my life has been greatly enriched by these contacts and differing approaches to life. For many years, we entertained students from all countries in our home, and later, during the war years, people from every country in Europe, besides friends from all the British colonies and the Dominions.

I have never been an omnivorous reader, holding the view that over-

much reading tends to destroy original thought and make us unconsciously derivative. But I like to read some good literature every day, mostly at the end, though not in bed, as unlike most people it keeps me awake however carefully I choose the book. During the war I re-read Trollope, Jane Austen, and other old favourites, and found in them a pleasant respite from the noisy manifestations overhead. My taste is catholic. My favourite journals, apart from reviews, are *Vogue* and *Good Housekeeping*.

Much of my leisure has been spent in the theatre, for I am an ardent playgoer and have seen most of the world's great plays from Euripides to Shaw, some of them many times, as apart from the play itself I regard acting as one of the greatest of the interpretive arts, calling forth great qualities of intellect, imagination, and restraint.

I have had great fun teaching myself simple dressmaking, etc., and for that purpose have been accompanied all my life by a dummy model of myself, known to my friends as Melanch—also, she alone has kept her youthful contours and like the figures on the Grecian Urn, she is for ever young. Gardening I love but also, at present I have no garden.

Whenever possible, I like to talk to people on buses, in the streets and parks, in cafés, etc. I am rather like a friendly puppy who goes up to people wagging its tail and expecting them to be nice and friendly, and feeling quite surprised and hurt if they are unresponsive. In this way, I have had many interesting, amusing, and sometimes tragic encounters, and have learnt something of the other person's point of view—I find people readily confide in strangers. Especially did I enjoy this in America, where it is more usual than in England, and memory paints many pleasant pictures of this great country and of the kindness and hospitality of its people. Similarly I have met many Americans over here.

I seem to have left the poor housewife far behind with her pots and pans, but to return to her for the moment I would say that of all occupations the housewife's is the most diversified and rewarding, and one where skill and originality are needed, for in this work both brain and hands play an equal part. So interesting and creative do I find cooking that much of my time is spent in this most constructive of all work. As a housewife I must pay tribute to my craft, and say that I consider the art of home-making the most fundamentally satisfying of all arts. If any young people of my own sex have read thus far, I think they will exclaim This was written by a Victorian, and, my dears, you would be right, but also by one whose gratitude and admiration for your splendid war service is such that she wishes you to have full reward by becoming also Happy Housewives!

Whatever life has brought, I have never been bored, and could echo a great deal of Rupert Brooke's splendid poem "The Great Lover,"

and say with him "All these have been my loves" One's leisure should be used so that we are constantly building up these happy memories

## A LONDON LIBRARIAN LOOKS TO RETIREMENT

The constantly suggested aim of social reformers, and others, for less work and more leisure is seldom accompanied, so far as I have seen, by further suggestions of what to do with this leisure when it has become an accomplished fact. There are far too many people who regard leisure as synonymous with idleness. The need for correcting this impression is indeed very urgent, for wasted leisure, in bulk or on a national scale, is without doubt a national menace. Preparation for the proper use of leisure time then would seem to be just as vital as preparation for a working career.

It may be said that there are two types of leisure to be considered—the one which follows the workaday routine and that which one would hope to have during retirement. From a proper use of the former the latter would obviously be influenced, and thus the problem of "what shall I do when I retire?" would be solved. As an example of what I mean perhaps I can illustrate what has always been my method of facing up to the use of leisure.

During a long career among books and reading, pursued with interest, it was natural that a number of subjects should become outstanding to me, and these subjects, combined with my own natural tastes, give a lead to my ideas and desires. These natural tastes include, for instance, a liking for open-air and the countryside, music, reading, both kinds of gardening (kitchen and landscape), and above all, a house to live in designed and decorated to satisfy my own wishes.

All these ideas and tastes have been steadily pursued for years, and all my leisure time has been devoted to one or other of these tastes in consequence I have never been at a loss for something to do when "off duty." The natural taste for the country meant to me—why not live in it? Thus I went to the Chilterns, and for nearly thirty years have travelled backwards and forwards thirty-four miles each way every day. A waste of time? Not at all. During the journeys I have made use of my taste for reading and literature and have even studied for examinations in the train.

Country cottages often have what town-dwellers call inconveniences, and endeavours to overcome these so exercised my ingenuity that the experience gained became a positive advantage. This led to the furthering of my desire to develop a type of house which should have all the comforts of town life inside to combine with the beauty of the country outside. Continuing my quest I eventually designed my own place and

had it built, less interior decoration—painting, tiling, etc. This latter I have done myself since the building, in my leisure hours, and the work has given me great pleasure and satisfaction. The laying-out and upkeep of the garden both for kitchen and beauty was another pleasure, and consequently I have always had, even during the war, a plentiful supply of good, fresh vegetables and fruit, and for a rest, a nice garden to sit in—inside the house during the winter, or in the evenings all the year round, music, reading, re-decoration, and "handyman's jobs."

This, I hope, suggests how the proper use of leisure time can be of mental and physical benefit. I think I can claim that, not only have my spare hours been usefully employed, but I have something to do and look forward to during my approaching retirement—the second type of leisure mentioned above.

Not everyone is interested in the direction I have taken, of course, but there are other roads to travel and ideas can always be made to spring from the particular work one is more or less permanently engaged in. The main necessity, in my opinion, is to start on these ideas early in life—the earlier the better—and to set one's self a long-distance target. Having done this, make steadily for the objective throughout life. It will never be finished, but that does not matter, you will be doing something for a purpose all the time.

Much more attention should be paid to this aspect of life than has been the case. If parents and teachers would watch their sons and pupils, they could or should be able to indicate and encourage them in a line of useful occupation during spare time. There must be something that each and everyone of us is interested in. Find out early what it is and follow through to the end. I am quite sure that "Waste not, want not" applies more to leisure than to money.

### A RECORD OF PUBLIC WORK

After a long and active life in the service of a great professional institution, during which he was also engaged in voluntary social work, this contributor recurred some time ago, and has now, at my request, sent the following note:

It is increasingly important to arrive at a proper understanding of what leisure is and how it can be used, seeing that science is for ever finding means of eliminating human labour, which must result in lessening hours of toil and in ampler leisure time. To the man looking forward to retirement, the use of leisure becomes an all-important matter. There is nothing more sad that I can envisage than one who, after an active business life, becomes free from those activities and able to enjoy the fruits of his labour, but finds himself without the means of using these

opportunities in a satisfactory way. And this is impossible unless he has learned to use such leisure as he may already have had in adding to the sum of human happiness by making his contribution to one or other of the many forms of social service. Normally, opportunities galore present themselves to those well disposed and wishful to be of use to their fellow-man.

I am not sure whether I can claim to have had any leisure to use. For about forty years the whole of my spare time, when free from the trammels of earning my living, was devoted to a form of social service that appealed to my imagination. This was entirely non-political and was concerned with Friendly Society and general temperance work throughout the United Kingdom. It necessitated attending about 150 meetings a year in the effort to induce others to embrace the ideals I advocated, and at all times much correspondence, etc.

I reached retirement and chose a popular south-east coast resort for my home, satisfied to spend the time previously devoted to my paid occupation (though continuing my voluntary work) in caring for a garden and generally loafing about. Within a year, however, I was rooted out by a local body and induced to stand for the Borough Council. Being successful in this, a new phase of activity presented itself. Within two years I had become chairman of the Valuation Committee, vice-chairman of three other committees, chairman of the local savings committee, member of Watch, Finance, and other committees, and Deputy Mayor for two years. When the war started I was made one of the Emergency Committee of five members, and in September 1943, Military Welfare Officer for the district. This is a seven-days a week job, and I may say that, whilst putting this short statement down—on a Sunday—I have been interrupted by callers and telephone messages on this account alone.

So I find myself, at 74 years of age, more fully occupied than at any time of my life, and begin to wonder where my leisure comes in. Needless to say, the whole of the work is voluntary.

(It may be added that this correspondent is completely happy in his work and family life—he is a proud great-grandfather—and for his age is remarkably young and active, his interests keeping him so. He adds a note that, during the preceding six months, his diary shows that he attended 141 meetings and travelled nearly 7,500 miles in war conditions.)

. Other examples have been received, but owing to lack of space await future publication.

## II—BODIES REFERRED TO IN THE BOOK OR ASSOCIATED WITH LEISURE OR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

National Book League	Holiday Fellowship
Poetry Society	National Union of Students
Pedestrians' Association	L.C.C. Literary and other Institutes
Ramblers' Federation	National Federation of Women's Institutes
Youth Hostels Association, Welwyn Garden City	Townswomen's Guild
Commons and Footpath Pre- servation Society	Women's Co-operative Guild
National Trust	National Council of Social Service
Council for the Preservation of Rural England	London Council of Social Service
Cyclists' Touring Club	Youth Council of Great Britain
Automobile Association	Co-operative Union and Guild
Selborne Society	Workers' Educational Associa- tion
London Society	National Adult School Union
London Playing Fields Associa- tion	Toynbee Hall and other Uni- versity Settlements
English Folk Dance and Song Society	Fabian Society
Travel Association of Great Britain	British Film Institute
Workers' Travel Association	London Film Society
Co-operative Holidays Associa- tion, Manchester	British Drama League
Camping and Caravanning Club of Great Britain	Arts Council of Great Britain

Except where otherwise indicated, the headquarters of all these bodies are in the London area and may be found in the current Telephone Directory.

### III—BOOKS TO READ ON LEISURE

The following list, arranged in order corresponding with the sections of the book, does not pretend to be exhaustive, but has been selected as likely to prove interesting to readers as dealing with Leisure generally or giving further information on particular pursuits. Under certain heads, some periodicals have also been named. Organizations are listed separately.

#### LEISURE IN GENERAL

- Avebury, Lord. *The Pleasures of Life. The Use of Life. Beauties of Nature*
- Balchun, N. *Income and Outcome*
- "Bankrupt Bookseller" *Down but Not Out*
- Bennett, Arnold. *How to Make the Best of Life. How to Live on 24 Hours a Day.*
- Boyd and Ogilvie *Challenge of Leisure* (New Education Fellowship)
- Burns, C. Dehle. *Leisure in the Modern World* (based on broadcast talks)
- C O P E C. *Leisure*
- Dark, Sidney. *How to Enjoy Life, After Working Hours*
- Durant, H. W. *The Problem of Leisure*
- Ellis, H. F. *The Pleasure's Yours* (essays on leisure in light relief from Punch)
- Hammond, J. L. and B. *The Bleak Age, Growth of Common Enjoyment*
- Halmerton, P. G. *The Intellectual Life*
- Joad, C. E. M. *Diogenes, or the Future of Leisure*
- Lecky, W. E. H. *The Map of Life*
- , Lynd, R. S. and H. M. *Middletown, Middletown in Transition* (sections on organization and spending of leisure in U.S.A.)
- Mussen, L. R. *The Employment of Leisure* (for schools)
- New Survey of London Life and Labour (vol. *Leisure*)
- Rownree, Seebohm. *Poverty and Progress* (section on Leisure)

Russell, Bertrand *The Conquest of Happiness*  
 Sinclair, R. *Metropolis Man* (section on Playtime)  
 Veblen, T. *Theory of the Leisured Classes*

### BOOKS AND READING, LIBRARIES, PRESS

Bennett, Arnold *Literary Taste* (Pelican edition, revised by Frank Swinnerton)  
 Maugham, W. Somerset. *Books and You*  
 Pocock, Guy *Brush Up your Reading*  
 Q *The Art of Reading*  
 Sunnett, W. E. *Books and Reading*  
 Baker, Dr. E. A. *The Uses of Libraries*  
 Jast, L. S. *The Library and the Community*  
 McColvin, L. R. *Libraries and the Public*  
 Dibblee, G. B. *The Newspaper* (Home University Library)  
 Cummings, A. J. *The Press* (20th Century Library)  
 Harris, H. Wilson. *The Daily Press*  
 Robbins, Sir Alfred. *The Press* (Benn's sixpences)  
 Steed, Wickham. *The Press* (Penguin Special)  
 Periodicals The principal papers and reviews are mentioned in the section "Newspapers."

### POETRY

Oxford Book of English Verse.  
 Pelican editions, *Book of English Poetry*, and the *Century's Poetry*  
 English Association, *Poems of Today* (three series)  
 Methuen; A *Anthology of Modern Verse* (especially Robert Lynd's Introduction)  
 Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* *New Golden Treasury* (Everyman)  
 Poetry Society. *Pocket-book of English Poetry*  
 Augustan Books of Modern Verse Over 100 titles.  
 Lewis, C. Day. *Poetry for You*  
 Hudson, W. H. *Introduction to the Study of English Literature*  
 (Chapter on Poetry)

Hazlitt's *Essays on Poetry and the Poets*  
 Johnson, Dr *Lives of the Poets*  
 Periodicals *Poetry Review*

### WALKING

Belloc, Hilaire. *The Path to Rome, The Footpath Way*  
 Cooper, Rev A. N. *The Tramps of the Walking Parson, Quaint  
Talks about Long Walks, Tales of My Tramps*  
 Davies, W. H. *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*  
 Graham, Stephen *The Gentle Art of Tramping, The Tramp's  
Anthology*  
 Lucas, E. V. *The Open Road; The Friendly Town*  
 Murray, Geoffrey *The Gentle Art of Walking*  
 "Pathfinder" *The Complete Rambler*  
 Ramblers' Association *The Ramblers' Handbook (annual)*  
 Sharp, A. *The Rucksack Way*

### MAPS AND GUIDES

Lynam, E. *British Maps and Map-Makers*  
 Winterbotham, H. S. *A Key to Maps*  
 Muirhead's Blue Guides (Macmillan)  
 Baedeker's Guides (Allen & Unwin)  
 Highways and Byways series  
 Penguin Guides, Black's Guides, etc

### CYCLING, etc

Moore, Harold. *The Complete Cyclist*  
 Wellbye, R., and others *Cycling Tours Book*  
 Fraser, J. Foster *Round the World on a Wheel*  
 Lightwood, J. T. *The Cyclists' Touring Club, History*  
 Newman, Bernard *Various Books on Cycling Journeys*  
 Thorenfeldt, K. *Round the World on a Wheel*  
 Wray, W. Fitzwater *The Kuklos Papers*  
 Prioleau, John *Motor-tour books*  
 Periodicals *C T C Gazette, Cycling, motoring journals*

## OTHER OUTDOOR PURSUITS

Duncan, F. M., and L. T. *Book of the Countryside.*  
 Fisher, A. B. *Eyes and No Eyes series.*  
 Gordon, H. *Rambler's Companion to the Countryside*  
 Hammerton, Sir J. A. *Our Wonderful World.*  
 Johnson, S. C. *Rambler's Pocket Guide to Nature*  
 Step, E. *Nature Rambles, Wayside and Woodland Trees, Flowers,  
etc.* (This is only a brief selection; there are many others.)  
 Crowther, J. G. *Outline of the Universe* (Pelican)  
 Hinks, A. R. *Astronomy* (Home University Library)  
 Jeans, Sir J. H. *Stars in their Courses; The Mysterious Universe*  
 Lethaby, W. R. *Architecture* (Home University Library).  
 Richards, J. M. *Introduction to Modern Architecture* (Pelican)  
 Dickson, H. N. *Climate and Weather* (H.U.L.)  
 Gregory, J. W. *The Making of the Earth* (H.U.L.)  
 Fisher, John *Watching Birds* (Pelican)

Then there are the Classics, such as —

White, Gilbert. *Natural History of Selborne*  
*Thoreau's Walden*  
 Jefferies, Richard. *Wild Life in a Southern Country, etc.*  
 Hudson, W. H. *Nature in Downland, A Shepherd's Life, etc.*  
 Walton, Izaak. *The Compleat Angler.*

## SPORTS AND GAMES

For individual sports and games, see generally the volumes of the Badminton, Foulsham, Lonsdale, and other series

Aldin. *Book of Outdoor Games.*  
 Hedges, S. G. *Books of Indoor Games*  
 Phillips and Westall. *Books of Indoor Games*  
*Leisure Hour Sports, Games and Hobbies*  
*Daily Express Book of Sports and Games.*  
*The Weekend Book.*

Periodicals There are journals devoted to most individual sports.

## HOBBIES AND CRAFTS

Dalzell, W. R., and others. *Let's Make It* (book of hobbies)

Foulsham's *Practical Manuals of Handicrafts* (series)

Hedges S. G. *Everybody's Book of Hobbies and Handicrafts*

Odham's. *The Home Workshop*.

Phillips, S. *Stamp Collecting, etc.*

Rogers, S. R. H. *Let's Make Something*

Wheeler, J. E. *The Practical Handyman* and books on individual hobbies

## HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL

Golding, D. (Ed.) *Kirkby Travel Books* (series)

England (and other Countries) on £10 (series)

Leonard, T. A. *Adventures in Holiday Making* (C.H.A. and H.F.)

Rolt, L. T. C. *The Narrow Boat* (canals)

Tatchell, Frank. *The Hippy Traveller*

Royal Geographical Society. *Hints to Travellers*

No attempt is made to list individual travel books. They are legion, and increase every year

Periodicals. *The Geographical Magazine*. The principal agencies and associations named elsewhere issue journals and other literature.

## LANGUAGES AND WORDS

Dent's "Brush-Up," Hugo's *Simplified*, and Marlborough's *Self-Taught Handbooks*

Concise Oxford, and other Dictionaries

Wilson, S. G. *Student's Guide to Modern Languages*

Bowman, W. D. *Surnames, their Origin and History*

Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names.

Ewen, C. H. L. *History of Surnames of the British Isles*

Mawer and Stenton. *English Place Names* (and other publications of the English Place-Name Society).

Vallins, G. H. *Words in the Making*

Weekley, E *Surnames, Words and Names*  
 Taylor, Isaac *Words and Places* (Everyman)  
 Trench, E *The Study of Words* (Everyman)

### FRIENDSHIP

Casson, H N *Friendship*  
 Currie, S *How to Make Friends Easily*

Among the Classics, Cicero's, Seneca's and Emerson's Essays on Friendship

### SOCIAL SERVICE

Blackshaw, W *The Community and Social Service*  
 Henriques, J Q *Citizen's Guide to Social Service*  
 MacIver, O A *What Can I Do?* (Guide to Social Service)  
 National Council of Social Service *The Voluntary and Public Social Services*, Handbook of Information.  
 Pimlott, J A R *Toynbee Hall 50 Years of Social Progress*  
 Wickwar, W H *The Public Services*  
 Hedges, S G *Youth Club Activities*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Finer, H *English Local Government*  
 Jenks, Ed *Outline of English Local Government*  
 Warren, John H Town Hall series on Local Government  
*Local Government Handbook* (annual)  
 Malden, H E *Rights and Duties of an English Citizen*  
 Robson, W A *Development of Local Government*  
 Shelley, A N C *The Councillor* (Discussion Books)  
 Wright, C K *Lighter Side of Local Government*  
 Harris, Percy *London Government*  
 Home University Library—  
 Parliament Sir C P Ilbert  
 Conservatism Lord Hugh Cecil  
 Liberalism L T Hobhouse

Socialism. J R. MacDonald  
*Political Thought in England*, 4 volumes  
 Jenks, Ed *History of Politics*  
 Courtney, Lord *The Constitution*  
 Wallas, Graham. *Human Nature in Politics, The Great Society*

### HOW THE COMMUNITY LIVES AND WORKS

Bell, Lady *At the Works*  
*Collins' England in Pictures* (series), Women's Institutes  
 Holmes, Thomas *The Police Courts*  
 Lieck, A. H *Bow Street World*  
 "Solicitor" *English Justice* (Pelican)  
 Spring-Rice, M *Working Class Wives* (Pelican Books)  
 Webb, Sidney and Beatrice *Industrial Democracy* (T U's)  
 Webb, Beatrice *The Co-operative Movement*  
 Co-operative Working Women. *Life as We Have Known It*  
 Pearse and Crocker *The Peckham Experiment*

(and many other books on social problems and industry)

### BROADCASTING

BBC Yearbook (annual)  
 Bloomfield, P. *BBC*  
 Eckersley, P *Behind the Microphone*  
 Lambert, R. S *Ariel and all his Quality*  
 Matheson, Helen *Broadcasting* (Home University Library)  
 Maine, B S *BBC and its Audience* (Discussion Books)  
 Rolo, G *Radio Goes to War*  
 Smithers, S. W *Broadcasting from Within*  
 Periodicals *Radio Times, The Listener.*

### MUSIC

Darnton, C *You and Music* (Pelican)  
 Davies, Sir H Walford *Pursuit of Music*

Hadow, Sir W H. *Music* (Home University Library)  
 Johnson, W W. *So This is Music.*  
 Scholes, Percy. *Oxford Companion to Music.*  
 Turner, W J. *Music, An Introduction*  
 Winn, C. *Music Calling* (Discussion Books)

Periodicals *Musical Times*

### FILMS

Manvell, Roger. *Film* (Pelican)  
 Rotha, Paul. *Documentary Films*  
 Cameron, A C. *Film in National Life*  
 Ford, R. *Children at the Cinema*  
 Gordon, Jan and Cora. *Stardust in Hollywood*  
 Spencer and Waley. *The Cinema Today*

Periodicals *Kinematograph Weekly*, *Documentary New Letter*,  
*Film Bulletin*

### THE THEATRE

Ministry of Education. *The Drama in Adult Education*  
 Irvine, St. John G. *The Theatre in My Time*  
 Knowles, Dorothy. *The Censor, the Drama and the Film*

Periodicals *The Playgoer*; *Era*

### ART GALLERIES, MUSEUMS, ETC.

Lambert, R. S. *Art in England* (Pelican)  
 MacColl, D. S. *What is Art?* (Pelican)  
 Newton, Eric. *European Painting and Sculpture* (Pelican)  
 Witt, R. C. *How to Look at Pictures*  
 Kenyon, Sir Frederic. *Libraries and Museums* (Benn, 6d.)  
 Livingstone, Sir Richard. *The Future in Education*  
 Robinson, Sir M. *British Universities* (Benn, 6d.)  
 Williams, W. E. and A. E. Heath. *Learn and Live* (Adult  
 Education)

## DIARIES

Ponsonby, Lord *English Diaries*  
*British Diarists* (Benn's sixpennies)  
 Some famous Diaries. Pepys, Evelyn, Fanny Burney, Greville,  
 Creevy, Parsons Woodforde and Kilvert, Barbelthon, A C  
 Benson, Grousmuth, *Diary of a Nobody*  
 Journals: Swift, To Stella John Woolman, John Wesley  
 Autobiographies. Benvenuto Cellini, Benjamin Franklin,  
 Gibbon, John Stuart Mill, Anthony Trollope, R B Haydon.  
 Letters Paston Family, Dorothy Osborne to William Temple,  
 Chesterfield, Horace Walpole, Cowper, Lamb, etc

## PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Plato, Sir Richard Livingstone *Selected Passages from Plato*  
 (World's Classics)  
 Epictetus, *Moral Discourses* (Temple Classics or Everyman)  
 Aurelius, Marcus. *Meditations* (Temple Classics or Everyman)  
 Aristotle's *Ethics* (Everyman)  
 Joad, C. E. M. *Philosophy*  
 Webb, Clement *History of Philosophy* (H U L.)  
 Spencer, Herbert. *First Principles* (Williams & Norgate)  
 James, William *Papers on Philosophy* (Everyman)  
 Russell, Bertrand *Problems of Philosophy* (H U L.), *Conquest of  
 Happiness* (Allen & Unwin)  
 Wildon Carr *Bergson, and the Philosophy of Change* (Jack.)  
 Lecky, W. E. H. *The Map of Life* (Longmans)  
 Avebury, Lord. *Pleasures, and the Use of Life* (Macmillan)  
 Smuts, J C *Holism*  
 Brock, A Clutton. *The Ultimate Belief* (Constable)

# *Index*

Anthologies 33  
Architecture 54  
Armchair travel 65  
Art galleries, 125  
    Guides and photographs 126  
Arts Council, 124  
Arts League of Service, 121  
Astronomy, 52  
Autobiographies 132  
Automobile Association, 50  
Avebury Lord, popular books quoted, 12  
"Bankrupt Bookseller," *Down but Not Out* quoted, 12  
BBC, 107  
Bennett, Arnold, *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day* quoted, 12  
    *Literary Taste* quoted, 33  
Bibliography, 149  
Bicycles, 47  
Bird watching, 56  
Bodies concerned with leisure, 143  
Books and reading, 20  
Books read, record, 24  
Books to read on leisure, 149  
Bowling, 58  
British Drama League, 121  
British Film Institute, 117  
Broadcasting and television, 103  
    Music, 110  
  
Campanology, 63  
Camps, holiday, 72  
    Camping, 73  
Canoeing and sailing, 74  
Caravanning, 73  
Care committees, 83  
C.E.M.A., 121  
Chem, 61  
Cinema-going 115  
Citizens' Advice Bureaux, 91  
Climbing, 53  
  
Collecting 63  
Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, 40  
Community centres, 26, 90  
Community, life of, 100  
Concerts, 110, 129  
Cook's tours, 70  
Co-operative holidays, 70  
    Association, 71  
Co-operative movement, 40  
Council for the Preservation of Rural England, 41  
Councillors' work, 94  
Crafts and hobbies, 62  
Crosswords 60  
Cruising 72  
Cyclists' Touring Club, 43  
Cycling, 45  
  
Dancing 61, 114  
Darts, 60  
Diaries and diary-keeping, 110  
Dictionaries 81  
Doing nothing art of, 134  
Drama 119  
    In adult education, 120  
  
English Folk Dance Society, 114  
Ervine St. John, on repertory, 120  
Examples, personal, 143  
  
Films, 115  
    In schools, 118  
Film Societies 117  
Flying, 75  
Friendly Societies, 91  
Friendship, 83  
  
Games and sports, 57  
Gardening 55  
Golf, 57  
Graham, Stephen, on tramping, 18  
Maps, 42

Gramophone, 110  
 Guide-lecturers, 125  
 Guides, 44, 67  
 Gymnastics, 59

Hadow, Sir W. H., *Music quoted*, 109  
 Hamilton, P. G., *Intellectual Life*  
     quoted, 13  
 Health, 15  
 Hellenic Travellers' Club, 72  
 Hob-hoes and crafts, 62  
 Holiday Camps, 72  
 Holiday Fellowship, 71  
     Records, 76  
 Holidays and travel, 63  
 Home-making, 59  
 Housewife on Leisure, 142

Indoor games, 59  
 Industrial visits, 101  
 Instruments, musical, 111

Jeffries, R., *Story of my Heart*  
     quoted, 135  
 Justices of the Peace, 95  
 Juvenile organizations, 82

King George V., his list of books  
     read, 24

Languages and words, 77  
 Lectures, 129  
     Lunch-hour, 129  
 Leisure Society, 140  
     Use of 10, 139  
     Personal examples, 143

Leonard, T. A., *Adventures in  
     Holiday-making*, 71

Letter-writing, 85, 133  
 Librarian looks to retirement, 145  
 Libraries, 25  
     Public, 26, 95  
     Circulating, 27  
 Listener's Association, 108  
 Listening, art of, 103  
 Literary rambles, 54  
 Livingstone, Sir Richard, *The Future  
     in Education* quoted, 9

Local Government, 93  
     Handbook, 95  
 London Council of Social Service,  
     85  
 London County Council institutes,  
     62, 72  
 London, cycling in, 48  
     Parking cycles, 48  
 London theatres, 122  
 Lonely people, 83  
 Loudspeakers, 105  
 Lynd Robert quoted 14  
     Essay on poetry 33

Marvell, Dr. F. M. quoted, 118  
 Maps, 43  
 Motoring, 49  
 Music 109

National Council of Social Service,  
     84  
 National Theatre movement 121  
 National Trust 41  
 National Union of Students, 71  
 Nature study 51  
 Newspapers and reviews, 28

Old people, 91

Parks, 127  
 Parliament 101  
 Parliaments, local, 95  
 Peckham Health Centre, 95  
 Pen-friendship, 86  
 Personal examples, 142  
 Philately, 135  
 Photography, 64  
 Play-bills, 122  
 Play-reading circles, 123  
 Poetry, 32  
     Broadcasting, 36  
     Readings 33-6  
 Poetry Society, 35  
 Police courts, 100  
 Politics, 97  
 Press, books on, 30  
 Probation and prison work, 91  
 Public assistance, 92  
 Public work, record of, 146

Rail-and-cycle tours, 49  
 Rail touring, 74  
 Ramblers' Association, 40  
 Reading, 20  
     Methods of, 22  
 Record of books read, 24  
 Repertory movement, 120  
 Retirement, 17, 18  
 Reviews, 30  
 Roberts, Dr. *Everyman in Health and Disease*, 15  
 Russell, Bertrand, quoted, 14  
 Scapa Society, 41  
 Schools, work in, 83  
 Shaw Bernard quoted, 12, 14  
 Sherriff R. C., *Forsight in September*, 65  
 Simnett, W. E., *Books and Reading*  
     quoted, 21  
 Singing, 113  
 Skating, 58  
 Social service, 87  
 Sports and games, 57  
 Stevenson, R. L., quoted, 15, 136,  
     137  
 Sunday Tramps, 41  
 Swimming, 58  
 Tchekov, on doing nothing, 136  
 Television, 106  
 Theatre, the, 119  
     Programmes, 122  
 Thomas, P. G., *Tenement in Soho*,  
     16  
 Tramping, 37  
 Tramps, Sunday, 41  
 Travel, 65  
     Home, 67  
     Foreign, 69  
 Travel Association, 63  
 Travellers' Club, 76  
 Use of leisure, 10, 139  
 Village Drama Society, 121  
 Walking, 37  
 Walking parson, 38  
 Women's Institutes, 83  
 Women's Voluntary Service, 83  
 Words, study of, 80  
 Workers' Travel Association, 71  
 Youth and age, 16  
 Youth clubs, 49  
 Youth Hostels Association, 39

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MAHARANA BHUPAL  
COLLEGE,  
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*Class No.....*

*Book No .. . . .*

THE  
*LEISURE*  
HOW TO ENJOY IT

by  
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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	9
THE USE OF LEISURE	
YOUTH AND AGE	
Books and Reading	20
LIBRARIES	
NEWSPAPERS AND REVIEWS	
Poetry	32
Walking	37
The Joy of Maps	42
Cycling, etc.	45
Other Outdoor Pursuits	51
Sport and Games—outdoor and indoor	57
Hobbies and Crafts	62
Travel and Holidays	67
Languages and Words	77
Friendship	83
Social Service	87
Local Government and National Politics	93
How the Community Lives and Works	100
Broadcasting and Television	103
Music	109
Films	115
The Theatre	119

	PAGE
Art Galleries, Museums, Lectures, etc	125
On Keeping a Diary	130
The Gentle Art of Doing Nothing	134
Conclusion	137
Appendices	142

**SOME PERSONAL EXAMPLES****LIST OF SOCIETIES, ETC****BOOKS TO READ ON LEISURE**

Index	158
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# To the Reader

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## GREETING!

WHATEVER its defects of style and substance, its sins of omission or commission, and doubtless there are many, I have thoroughly enjoyed writing this little book and can only hope that I may have succeeded in communicating some of that enjoyment to the reader, for enthusiasm may cover a multitude of faults.

There has been a great spate of writing round and about the general subject of leisure—*theoretical, abstract, argumentative and hortatory*; but instead of adding to the flood, it has seemed to me more useful to try and show how one person at least has managed to enjoy his all too scanty leisure-time, for the bulk of the book is based on personal experience.

For that reason, it cannot pretend to be exhaustive. Doubtless there are many other interesting employments for leisure hours (from stamp-collecting and wood-carving to mountaineering and gliding) of which I have little or no direct knowledge or experience. As my hope is that the book will sufficiently commend itself to the public to warrant further editions, I shall be very glad if readers will write to me with any observations, criticisms or suggestions which may occur to them either upon the subjects included in these pages or upon other leisure occupations within their own experience. I will gladly adopt anything that may be of service, and in any case shall be interested to learn how other people use and enjoy their leisure. Some personal examples are appended to the book, and with the co-operation of my readers, this section may be expanded in future editions.

W. E. S.

## **DEDICATED**

Dear Reader, to You  
in (I hope) your many thousands  
now and in years to come

## *Introduction*

---

LEISURE, we are told, is already becoming a social problem. With constant improvements in the efficiency of our productive machinery, the shortening of working hours and the extension of holidays with pay, it seems that the great majority of us, who work for our living, may become dangerously emancipated from our labours before we have learned what to do with our too abundant freedom. Meanwhile, we have yet to solve the problem of enforced leisure or unemployment created by the relative inefficiency of our distributive system. We shall never solve it until we have finally abolished the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty.

Apart from the material plane, however, the mere existence of a problem of leisure (except indeed the problem of finding it) in relation to such a fleeting thing as human life may sound ironical to those who, like the present writer, have never enough time for all the things they want to do, and for whom several lives of average duration would still be too short. Nevertheless, the use we all make of our available leisure time is a matter of growing importance to an increasing number of people of all ages and conditions.

In the past there existed what was called "the leisured class" who were a very small minority, and the great majority belonged to the "working classes," though this description strictly applied also to many employers and professional people. Speaking of leisure in his stimulating little book, *The Future of Education*, Sir Richard Livingstone says, "Aristotle may have gone too far when he said that the object of education was to help men to use their leisure rightly. But we have treated the majority as if they were to have no leisure, or as if it did not matter how they used what leisure they had. Art, music, science, literature, were for the few. If the leisure of the future is to be entirely devoted to the films and the 'dogs,' civilization will not have gained much

by it. Fifty years ago, leisure was no concern of any but the well-to-do, who mostly wasted it." But today it is the concern of everybody.

This then is an unpretentious attempt to deal with leisure, not generally, as a social problem, but individually, as a personal problem. It is addressed to ordinary men and women, both young and old, who seek to make the best use of their spare time. Although the use of time as part of the general conduct of life has been the theme of philosophers from Plato and Seneca down to Bertrand Russell, very little seems to have been written by way of practical advice that is applicable to present-day conditions. That unfailing reflex of literary activity, the British Museum Subject-Index, only admits the heading in recent years, and amongst the comparatively few entries I have been unable to discover anything of the kind essayed here, else these pages would not have been written. In succeeding sections, reference will be made to books bearing upon various aspects of leisure, and the reader may find that this work possesses at least one useful feature in that these and other references have been collected together at the end under appropriate heads as a sort of modest bibliography of Leisure.

In the following pages, accordingly, after some general observations on the use of leisure, a number of specific suggestions will be offered. They are of course suggestions only, and are not intended to be either dogmatic or exhaustive, nor is it expected that more than a few will appeal to the individual reader, but if he lights upon only one or two hints that may prove helpful in his own case, then perhaps this little book has sufficiently achieved its purpose. Though in a few instances illustrations may be drawn from London conditions, as most familiar to the writer, no doubt other places will offer similar examples, and most of what follows is of course equally valid in town or country wherever people make their lives.

#### THE USE OF LEISURE

The right use of leisure is nothing less than the art of life. Our task-work, whether we be mechanics, clerks or Ministers of

State, is generally settled for us, and the only problem is to get it done as competently and expeditiously as we can. For some of us, it may be the most absorbing pursuit in life, which we intermit with reluctance to attend to social duties or for necessary relaxation. But under the present or perhaps any social system in this imperfect world, that is not possible for the majority of men and women, though even humdrum and uncongenial tasks can be made more interesting and pleasurable by conscious effort than would at first sight seem possible. There is a certain satisfaction in doing any job well, while the skilled craftsman and the creative artist have always joy in their labour. But even for the fortunate few of whom it may be said that their work is their life, it is questionable wisdom to become too exclusively absorbed in it—and what if it be taken away? Do we not all know people so completely immersed in their work or habituated to daily routine that they neglect to cultivate other interests, and when retirement comes, have no resource left?

Whatever our work, we all have our parts to play as citizens and human beings, our duties to the community, and to ourselves, to cultivate all sides of our nature and such talents as we have. The Greeks knew that the secret of a happy life lay in the zest for living combined with the right balance of activities and interests. If our free time be scanty, the question of its use is not less but more important. In youth, the time ahead seems illimitable and plans are spacious; in middle life, our days filled with work and responsibilities, its value and limits are better appreciated, and when retirement brings freedom from daily routine it is even more necessary and perhaps more difficult to make the best use of our time. Actually, time is like Balzac's *peau de chagrin*, except that it shrinks steadily without any wishing on our part.

Fortunately, it is not so much the quantity as the quality of living that counts—

We live in deeds not words, in thoughts not breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on a dial

We should count time in heart-throbs. He most lives

Who thinks most, feels more deeply, acts the best

For our present purpose, it will of course be assumed that the reader is of modest means, since this is the common lot, and that virtually the only wealth he has to dispose of is precisely the commodity we are considering, namely time or leisure—strictly speaking, it is the only form of wealth we can possess, as Arnold Bennett pointed out in his suggestively named essay, *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day*, which contains much sound sense. But money is scarcely necessary to the right use of leisure, it is surprising how many really worth-while things one can do that cost little more than the effort and interest of doing them. Incidentally, that is the theme of a queer but challenging book by the author of a "Bankrupt Bookseller" called *Drown but Not Out*, which professes to show how a bereaved and unemployed man rebuilt his life, and may be said to illustrate the axiom that what a man can do often depends upon what he can do without.

Even to go about the streets of a great city with an observant eye, to look at people, to watch the great pageant of life flowing past, can be, as many know, one of the most fascinating occupations. Equally this applies to the pageant of nature and the life of the countryside. The thing is to have the time "to stand and stare" and some reflective faculty. Today, moreover, in most cities and towns there are public services and amenities available to all who can make good use of them—Bernard Shaw once spoke of the palaces filled with treasures, well warmed and lighted and expertly staffed, and the many delightful estates he possessed, in common with the rest of the community, whose equal discriminating use of them could but add to his own enjoyment. Use is indeed the only real test of possession.

Does anyone now read those once familiar homilies, the popular writings of Lord Avebury? In addition to quite a considerable scientific output, he wrote books on *The Pleasures of Life*, *The Use of Life* and *The Beauties of Nature*, which had a great vogue in their day. My own copy of the first-named, printed in the early years of this century, was already approaching the quarter of a million mark, so they must have filled a popular need or figured largely in prize and presentation lists.

Probably both. It was in a chapter of *The Pleasures of Life*, on the choice of books, originally delivered as an address to the Working Men's College, that the author put forward a tentative list of the "Hundred Best Books" which was so widely discussed at the time and somewhat unfairly criticized later. As founder and patron saint of Bank Holidays, it seems appropriate that Lord Avebury (or Sir John Lubbock as he then was) should have concerned himself with the use of leisure, and though these books, like the more didactic effusions of the worthy Dr. Samuel Smiles, may now be regarded as characteristic Victorian productions (Lord Avebury was himself a remarkable product of that robust age) they nevertheless contain a good deal of practical counsel, if sometimes tritely expressed, which still makes profitable reading today, and they are a veritable mine of quotation from their author's immensely wide reading reinforced by his own scientific and other interests.

Of an even earlier date and on a somewhat different plane is Philip Gilbert Hamerton's *The Intellectual Life*, and lest the title should intimidate some, let it be said that Hamerton wrote "in the conviction that the intellectual life is really within the reach of everyone who earnestly desires it. It is not erudition that makes the intellectual man, but a sort of virtue that delights in vigorous and beautiful thinking, just as moral virtue delights in vigorous and beautiful conduct. Intellectual living is not so much an accomplishment as a state or condition of mind" and on the whole his book justifies the claim. The historian Lecky also wrote a somewhat discursive work entitled *The Map of Life*, and another example is Sir Arthur Helps' *Aphorisms*, "essays written in the intervals of business" (how eminently Victorian!) but once we embark on this field, there is a wide choice extending from the ancient classics down to, let us say, Bertrand Russell's *Conquest of Happiness*.

Except that some sort of working philosophy of life must, after all, whether consciously or unconsciously, form the basis of any sound or satisfying use of leisure, the subject is somewhat beyond the scope of these pages, though it will be briefly referred

to in the Conclusion, but broadly speaking, one may perhaps say that the sovereign receipt for happiness is to live outwardly and in others, rather than in oneself. As Bertrand Russell puts it, we should "aim at avoiding self-centred passions and at acquiring those affections and interests which will prevent our thought from dwelling perpetually upon ourselves. The happy man is he who lives objectively, who has free affections and wide interests, whose personality is neither divided against itself nor pitted against the world. Such a man feels himself a citizen of the universe enjoying freely the spectacle that it offers and the joys that it affords, untroubled by the thought of death, because he feels himself not really separate from those who will come after him. It is in such profound instinctive union with the stream of Life that the greatest joy is to be found."

To which, while quoting, one is tempted to add that fine confession of faith by Bernard Shaw. "I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no 'brief candle' to me, but a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

Apart from living outwardly and in others, rather than in oneself, having always a "purpose," as the Red Queen commanded Alice, and being actor in as well as eager spectator of the fascinating spectacle of life, one should always be seeking something new, some new interest, study or pursuit. When you lose zest or enthusiasm in life, when you are no longer curious about people or things, you are dying on your feet. "A man wrapped up in himself maketh a very small parcel." There are many instances of people taking up successfully some quite new study late in life, and I think it is Robert Lynd, in one of his inimitable essays, who points out the surprisingly invigorating effect this has upon them. They begin to live with a new intensity. We can all think of some such cases, and I remember seeing not a few

students of seventy or more in the evening institutes of London, especially the literary institutes, who were amongst the most eager there

To people with interests outside themselves as well as resources within, who can taste the joys both of companionship and of solitude, boredom or ennui is inconceivable, and those who talk of killing time may be reminded that in reality time is killing them. But idling too can be part of the use of leisure, even a rich and essential part, and one does not need Stevenson's eloquent "Plea for Idlers" to justify a morning spent lying on one's back in the grass gazing up to the sky. It is the hard workers who can idle best. So that if "life is real, life is earnest," one must add that the only way to get the best out of even the most serious things of life is to keep one's sense of humour about them, and that is really a sense of proportion and detachment.

It may be said that this is all very well, but the real basis of happiness in life and the prior necessities for the enjoyment of leisure are health and a good digestion. Health indeed is of the first importance; sound health and appetite with poverty, provided you have food, clothing, warmth and shelter, are infinitely better than riches without, but as this is not a manual of health (one of the best and completest of its kind I know is Dr. Roberts' *Everyman in Health and in Disease*) one can only say that, given a sound constitution (an inestimable gift) the golden rule is moderation and simplicity in all things—and zest! Some of the suggestions made later will have a direct bearing on health, but they are made not for that reason but for their intrinsic interest, and almost one might say, look after your interests and your health will look after itself, at least you will have no time to worry about it, and for the rest, plenty of exercise in the open air to give an edge to your appetite is all you need.

And yet, though health is so great an asset, we know that there have been and are many who, in deprivation and disease, have made their lives of the richest texture, there is no need to cite the classic example of Helen Keller, for everybody, fortunately for humanity, will think of heartening cases within their

own knowledge, certainly the present writer could tell of many severely handicapped people who by their courage and splendid example make the path easier for others, and will only mention at random that crippled son of a London dustman, Thomas, who wrote *A Tenement in Soho*. So lack of health—or of money, or employment—need not deter us from putting time to good use.

In fact, though the somewhat pugnacious attitude of "There but for the grace of God go I" is not to be recommended, it is both permissible and good policy, especially in adverse circumstances, to "count your blessings" and make the most of them. If it be any consolation in misfortune, there will always be someone more unfortunate still!

And finally, I like the tang of that old Spanish saying "God deny you peace, and grant you LIFE."

#### YOUTH AND AGE

Before coming to the specific suggestions which will occupy the rest of this book, there are one or two things I would like to say, first, to younger readers starting out on their working life, and at the other end of the scale, to those who have retired or are contemplating retirement from what the census papers call "gainful employment." For different reasons, the question of how best to use their own time should make equal appeal to both.

The more thoughtful of the younger people will probably have realized, else these pages would scarcely interest them, that having left schooling behind them, their real education is just beginning, and that it now lies entirely in their own hands. It is no longer a matter of formal lessons and classes (these would only be a preparation or ground work), but a somewhat rough-and-tumble affair in which they have to make their own terms with life. It is from life itself, from first-hand experience and contact with their fellows, that they will and indeed must gain their true education, and this is a lifelong affair. But it can be enlarged, enriched and deepened by our own free choice and conscious effort, and if one has above all an active curiosity about everything, if this precious natural instinct has not been dulled

or blunted, then the means of satisfying it are open to all, whatever one's circumstances in life.

If, apart from other interests, you have acquired a taste for reading, the door is wide open to a larger and richer world than you can know solely through daily contacts and experience, though this should be the touchstone and starting point of your travels in wide realms, and it may not merely be the key to knowledge, but a lifelong and priceless resource.

Leisure is more restricted than in the school-days that already seem far behind, but it should still be ample if used aright. Now that education has taken on a new meaning, and includes all the things we actively want to know, and the definite studies or crafts that we would like to take up and learn for ourselves, perhaps connected with our work, at any rate appealing to our own interests,—well, the evening institutes and polytechnics, besides the libraries, galleries, museums and other resources, exist to satisfy these needs, and reference is made to the facilities they offer in later pages. For the rest, any of the following suggestions may interest you now or later on.

Don't try to take on too much at first, and don't disperse your interests in too many directions at once, hold fast to those things you like best, there is time for everything. It is now within your power to make your own life, and there is no greater creative act open to human kind.

To those who have retired or are approaching retirement from their daily employment, I would say, above all, do not regard it as an end but as a beginning, a new life that is opening, richer, it may be, than anything that has gone before, if we choose to make it so. It may yet be long as human life goes in terms at least of quality and intensity, even if not of actual duration, and filled with activities and interests to the brim—that rests entirely with ourselves. But it needs actively making just as the earlier one did, and now it is entirely your own. Zest and enthusiasm must be brought to it, new interests must be sought, the old ones cultivated with fresh energy and ampler leisure. How often in the heat and burden of the day did we not

promise ourselves we should do this and enjoy that "when we had time", that perhaps we should read all the history of mankind, that we should browse at large on old favourites or tackle new ones, that we should see something more of this wonderful world, that we should "cultivate our gardens" both literally and figuratively, that at last we should have time to stand and stare, or even to sit and stare at the world of humanity. Well, now we have all the time there is, but to make good use of it is more than ever a creative art, needing the exercise of all our faculties, far more so indeed than in the days when we caught the bus or whatnot, and the greater part of our time was determined for us.

There is no more delightful picture of retirement than that drawn for us by Elia in his essay on "The Superannuated Man," but Elia's clerk, though long in arrears, was unexpectedly released at fifty, which is not the lot of most of us. Lamb speaks elsewhere of the longevity of the "lean annuitant" drawing regularly his modest quarterly allowance untroubled by daily anxieties or material cares.

Sometime, I would like to make a study of Retirement, not merely in its economic aspect and the means and agencies by which in all walks of life we prepare for it, but also and especially what we make of it when it comes, how we live and what we do in town or country—all of us working, professional or business men and women (do women ever retire?), be our means exiguous or sufficient, but such a study could of course only be undertaken with the full co-operation of the superannuated themselves. Granted that, it should be an interesting contribution, from one end of life, to this increasing problem of leisure.

One thing is certain, that money is not essential, and may be a hindrance, to the true enjoyment of retirement. A very modest competence, if it be secure, is the basis, but an eager mind, frugal living, books and friends, inner resources and active outward interests, are all that we need, and these we can all come by. In so far as the basic material necessities are concerned—adequate

food, warmth, clothing and shelter, care in sickness—no social system is right that does not make them available for everyone

It is time to "cut the cackle and come to the 'osse,'" though the reader was of course quite free to skip the introduction. The order of the following suggestions is a purely arbitrary one, and since not all of them are likely to interest every reader, perhaps the best way to use this book is to turn first, with the help of Contents or Index, to those subjects which especially appeal or arouse curiosity. On the other hand, there is nothing to stop you reading it straight through if you feel so inclined. The concluding section has been used to gather together some general observations, comments and quotations which had no obvious place elsewhere. A list of references to useful books and authorities quoted and consulted brings up the rear, and may in some measure make up for the deficiencies of the book.

## *Books and Reading*

---

Books may not appeal to everyone, but since they have been, and will continue to be, my greatest resource in life, this section for me stands inevitably first. Those whom it does not specially interest will pass it over, but every body at least reads the newspaper, and as I will try to show later, that indispensable record of and commentary upon current affairs may be made to yield greater profit if we bring some method and critical attention to the reading.

But life would indeed be a poor and narrow thing without books. They are, after all, the principal means by which we enlarge our mental horizon beyond the contacts and experience of everyday life, and enter into our common human heritage, the great past of mankind, the universe in which he dwells, the strivings of his spirit, both past and present, and his aspirations for the future. Not only is print the universal vehicle of contemporary thought, but books are our sole means of communion with great minds through the ages, with the philosophers, historians, poets, statesmen, dramatists, essayists, scientists, the explorers and travellers, and the novelists and story-writers. Books open the door to the world of creative thought and imagination. They are lifelong friends and the best of good company, never importunate and always at hand. We can select them freely from the best and greatest of mankind in all ages and countries, we can always add to their number, and however neglected, they will never fail us throughout life, in sickness and health, to the end.

Reading is a pursuit open to everyone, rich and poor alike, and a source of infinite and unfailing pleasure. True, reading is but one form of what may best be termed "the cultivation of the spirit," but while literature is not life, it is essential to complete living. A love of books is the sign of a cultivated man or woman, as intellectual curiosity is the true test of education. A room without pictures has been likened to a house without

windows. What, then, are we without books?—are not they the windows of the spirit? A book-lined room is finer than the most palatial interior.

The love of reading is said to be incommunicable, you have it naturally, or you have it not. It may be so, and certainly it cannot be taught, but I believe that in latent form at least, it is much more widely diffused than most of us suspect. Unfortunately, in many the spark is killed by early experience of schoolbooks, text-books and the like, or even unwise attempts to force literature upon us as a "subject," or turn it into "lessons." Books should be left in children's way, their natural curiosity satisfied if and when aroused, perhaps stories may be told or read to them if they are eager, but generally it is best to let them form the taste for themselves. My own love of books was first formed at a very early age when I was allowed to rummage among some shelves in a school-cupboard to which I was given a key and left to my own devices. The first book I can ever remember reading was *Oliver Twist*, and even its cover and type are indelibly printed on my mind. From that wonderful experience everything else followed.

Not everybody is of a studious or reading type, which is well, since, if we were all alike, it would be a very dull world, but whatever our other interests and activities, there are very few who cannot get some pleasure from reading. The golden rule is, read what you like best, and do not tackle books from a sense of duty, or because you believe or are told that you ought to read them.

I do not propose to go into great detail here about books, because I have dealt with the subject already in a small work entitled *Books and Reading*, which has gone through several editions and is available in every public library (In America, it is called *What Books Shall I Read?*) It is intended, not for the confirmed booklover, but for those, of all ages, who hesitate on the threshold of the world of books and seek some unobtrusive guidance therein. References to many useful helps to better reading are given in its pages and a few are included in the lists at

the end of this book, of these I would only like to mention specially here Arnold Bennett's *Literary Taste*, and for the praise of reading, R. M. Leonard's *Booklover's Anthology*, and the relevant chapters in Lord Avebury's *Pleasures and Use of Life*. The remainder of this section will therefore be devoted to some general suggestions on reading.

It is not quantity in reading that is important, but quality—quality, that is, both in the books chosen and the attention given to them. One may be well read without necessarily being widely read. A little reading regularly done is often much more fruitful than consuming so much time in reading that we have none for digesting and reflecting upon what we have read. We all give some time daily to the newspaper, if we only gave equal time each day to literature, our gain at the end of the year would be surprising. Bacon's oft-quoted advice still applies today. "Read not to contradict or to confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, writing an exact man."

Read above all for pleasure, you will get the greatest profit from those books you really enjoy, not from those you undertake as a task. Remember that what you get out of a book is generally proportionate to what you bring to it. Don't be afraid of a book because it is a "classic." The most enjoyable books are those which by common consent are regarded as the greatest, they have been proved by long experience to be the simplest and to have the most universal appeal. But not all of them will appeal equally to you at first, don't worry about that, but pass on to others you will probably come back later, but if not, there are in any case far more books of your kind than you can possibly enjoy in a long lifetime.

As to methods of reading, a great deal of breath and printer's ink has been expended in advising people how to read, but while there is certainly an art of reading, as of writing, both are

difficult to impart, except in the negative sense, as to obvious pitfalls to avoid. Most people probably read quite promiscuously and disconnectedly any matter that comes under their hand, suggested by friends, library lists, or advertisements, by passing fancy or other accident. There is no question that much pleasure may be derived from such reading, and to some, any kind of "method" would be anathema. The other extreme is to plan out in advance a systematic course of reading extending over a lengthy period, and to pursue the programme rigidly, with notebooks and other apparatus of study. This may sometimes be necessary for the study of a particular subject, but it is certainly not suitable for general reading. Nevertheless, we may often derive added pleasure from occasionally adopting a limited objective for our reading.

A good general rule is "Let one thing lead to another." For instance, if one has read Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*, it would be natural to turn to Carlyle's *French Revolution*, the perusal of which had greatly excited Dickens and doubtless spurred him to produce his fine dramatic effort. Carlyle's sombre masterpiece might suggest a corrective from some more sober historian, say Mignet (Everyman) or Belloc (Home University Library). If it should happily be one's first acquaintance with Carlyle, one would surely turn to his other great works, especially *Sartor Resartus* and *Past and Present*, which still stand out for me as great landmarks in my youthful voyages of discovery. Or from the *French Revolution*, one might be led to the study of its most remarkable product, Napoleon. What finer sequel than Thomas Hardy's great epic-drama *The Dynasts*? From this to the Wessex Novels is an obvious step.

Again, there is the possibility of following chronologically the development of the English novel from the days of Richardson and Defoe to Meredith and Conrad, or the writers of the present day, with side excursions to America and comparisons with the great Continental masters. The introductions by Walter Raleigh, George Saintsbury and other critics, and the compendious work of Dr E. A. Baker would help to give direction, and I can

imagine no more delightful objective and excuse for much pleasant reading.

A book may be read in relation to its period; the literature of a period may be compared with its history (Green's *Short History of the English People*, besides being a classic itself, is useful for this purpose); one form of letters with another in the same period, or one essayist with another, say Bacon with Montaigne. The possibilities are endless, and many will suggest themselves to the reader. Literature is like a great ocean, every part communicates with every other, and though one may embark far up a little creek, it will lead eventually to the open sea.

It is a good rule never to omit a preface or introduction when one is given, for in this either the author explains his purpose, or an editor or critic "explains" the author. When making acquaintance with a new author, it will add to the pleasure and interest his work has for us if we can read some good biography or critical account of his work, though we should always form our own opinion from the original. Useful for this purpose are the volumes in the *English Men of Letters* or similar series, or standard biographies, such as Forster's *Dickens*, Lockhart's *Scott*, Boswell's *Jackson*, Gibbon's and Trollope's *Autobiographies*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Charlotte Brontë*, and others. Some readers may like rather to specialize in biography and memoirs, in essays, in books of travel, or other branches of letters. But I have given so many detailed suggestions in my own guide to *Books and Reading*, that I must refer readers needing any further help to that source.

One small point: it is quite useful and profitable in retrospect to keep a simple record of the books one reads, with the date and possibly a word or two of characterization or comment in some cases, though author and title should normally be sufficient. In later years, such lists may possess much interest for us as a record of progress, or cause us to look up old favourites to see how they wear in our esteem. That very busy man, King George V, kept such a list over many years, and some extracts from it I have seen make in themselves interesting and sometimes surprising reading.

Reading is essentially a solitary pursuit, but it is always pleasant and often helpful to discuss books with one's friends, and some have found both pleasure and profit, besides giving more permanence to their reading, by forming small reading circles, meeting in each other's houses, to discuss books read in common.

Two habits to which I confess a lifelong addiction are, I know, practised with equal pleasure by many others, namely, reading in bed, and pocket or knapsack companions in the open air. At the end of a long and perhaps busy or tiring day, I know no greater luxury than to settle oneself comfortably in bed with an old favourite or a new book. Provided it be not too exciting, it is an excellent method of taking the mind off the day's concerns, and wooing sweet slumber. So long as the print is clear and the volume not too heavy to hold, my own taste is quite catholic (I've even read thrillers so, but do not recommend the practice), but many prefer something familiar and soothsung, if not soporific and there is indeed an excellent *Bedside Book*, which is a good standby, though anthologies are a little scrappy for the purpose.

As to the open air, I never go on a journey, or a tramp or cycle tour without tried or new friends in knapsack, bag or pocket, and these may be all sorts, though essayists, poets or novelists rank high on the list. I have written elsewhere on "Open Air Books," and I cannot help feeling that many a trusted friend or new acquaintance will acquire an added flavour from tasting its pages in the open air, seated perhaps on a stile, or will remain indissolubly associated in the memory with scenes and journeys when it was first enjoyed.

To the confirmed booklover, there is no greater delight than the gentle art of browsing on one's own bookshelves to see how old favourites wear in the affections and to taste their delights afresh, and this naturally brings me to the subject of Libraries.

#### LIBRARIES

I want to talk both of public and of private (that is to say, personal) libraries—for if it be but a shelf of old and much-used

favourites, everyone should possess books of one's own. But first of public libraries

From personal experience, I find that comparatively few people are fully aware of the library facilities of the country. There still lingers in some quarters a prejudice against what is wrongly termed the 'free' library. It is no more free than any other public service provided for the whole community, since it is paid for out of the rates, and therefore directly or indirectly by all of us. I have dealt in my guide fully with the use of libraries, the classification of books, aids to study, and so forth, and here I would only like to urge everyone to make good use of their local library, and to explore its resources.

Sometime soon, I hope that in every urban district at least there will be a Community Centre which will include the library, an institute for adult classes, hall for lectures and meetings, and a stage for repertory plays, besides of course facilities for recreation and refreshment for the community, young and old. Then a good public library will take its rightful place as the intellectual centre of the district. Even as it is, the public library probably gives better value for the moderate sum expended upon it than any other municipal service, and I speak with some knowledge as a chairman of library committees and former librarian (though not municipal). There is no longer restriction to a penny rate, but even now few libraries cost more than two or three pence in the pound, and the money is well spent.

But though the local collection may be modest, few ordinary users I think realize that it has greater resources behind it. There need be now no genuine student throughout the country, however remotely situated, who cannot get the books he wants. If he is in a village or country district he can be supplied through the county library system, and if the county centre has not the book, they can draw upon the resources of large towns in the area under the regional system, or upon the National Central Library in London. Even beyond this, for rare, special or technical books, there is what is known as the Outhier system, whereby many special or private libraries have agreed to lend

books through the National Central Library. The same arrangements apply to municipal libraries in towns and librarians and their staffs are always glad to help their readers. Most libraries have arrangements for reserving books, or for giving extra tickets, and these are often interchangeable between different districts.

In London at least the Union catalogue enables reference to be made to any book available throughout London. Readers in or near great centres, such as London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Oxford and Cambridge, are of course amply provided for, since, in addition to the municipal services, there are the great libraries, from the British Museum, university and special libraries downwards, access to which is generally available to the genuine student, though these do not as a rule lend out their books, except the famous London Library, a subscription institution.

I have mentioned these resources for the benefit of the serious reader, but of course the modest wants of most of us in this field are easily satisfied. Apart from the public library, many like to keep in touch with current literature and read books while they are more or less topical. It is not normally the function of the public library to supply this perfectly legitimate desire, though they do purchase the best of such books fairly promptly, and suggestions can always be made, but of course they would not be justified in spending public money on more than usually one copy of books which may have but a brief vogue. For this purpose, circulating libraries were formed, which for various rates of subscriptions supply current books, either on demand or after an interval. The most famous of these in Victorian times was Mudie's, now defunct, and the best known today are Boots, W. H. Smith, *The Times* Book Club, and others. The way to use these services with most profit is to follow the book reviews (using of course your own judgment and personal tastes) in such periodicals as *The Times Literary Supplement*, the *Spectator* and other reviews.

But it is not enough to borrow books. In these days, no one

need be without books of his own, even if it be only a solitary bookshelf of old and much-used favourites in humble bindings I can well remember when this constituted my library, and the books composing it are still among the most treasured volumes in my modest collection, which has been built up from boyhood to some two thousand odd from money, in early years at least, intended for other purposes In my guide, I have made suggestions for the formation of a private library, but this should be a labour of love and individual taste, and books are still fortunately within everybody's reach, though not so cheap as in the days of sixpenny and shilling classics But you will get far more lasting pleasure from your own books, however few, if well chosen, than you can from any number you may borrow.

#### NEWSPAPERS AND REVIEWS

We all read the newspaper, even if we read nothing else, though most of us would be surprised to be told there was any particular art in reading it Arnold Bennett has something to say (*in 24 Hours*) about the lavish way in which we normally read the newspapers—and he was a voracious newspaper-reader himself—but the remedy is not to banish them in favour of Marcus Aurelius or Epictetus as he suggests, but to read the newspaper with some method, selection and concentration. (And, of course, read the classics too)

Many of us read morning and evening and Sunday papers and spend far too much time on them, proportional that is, to what we get out of them Any journalist knows that newspapers are not meant to be read exhaustively or promiscuously, though everything (in theory) is there, it is for us to select and digest. I don't propose to tell you how to do this You must find the method which suits you best, but let there be at least some method The "make-up" of the paper will help you the principal news is always given prominent place and bolder type, the paper is arranged on a definite plan according to the subject-matter

If the paper is *The Times* (and apart from politics it is on the

whole the best from the news point of view) a good plan is to scan first the principal news items on the left-hand side of the middle, glance at the summary under the contents and read the "leaders" on the right-hand side. The third or fourth leader is usually in lighter vein. Generally, there is some special article on the leader page which deserves reading. Home and Foreign news are on separate pages. The Parliamentary and legal reports are both good. Letters to *The Times* often contain valuable matter contributed by authorities on their subjects. To read *The Times* daily with method and attention can be in itself a liberal education in current affairs.

The other papers all have their distinctive features which are readily discoverable. *The Telegraph*, like *The Times*, pays special attention to reports of meetings and conferences of all kinds. Every leading paper has normally its literary page, with book reviews, its dramatic, music, film and radio critics, to say nothing of city and sports sections which are important features to many readers.

If you have time to spare, it is a good thing to take two papers representing quite different points of view, say *The Times* and the *Herald*. London has, besides *The Times* and *Telegraph*, the *Mail*, *Express*, *Herald*, *News Chronicle* and the picture papers, which have a more popular appeal, but there are other papers published outside the metropolis which have a national standing, such as the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Yorkshire Post*, the *Glasgow Herald*, the *Scotsman*, the *Birmingham Post* and other leading provincial dailies.

There are still the Sunday papers. Sunday offers to the great majority in this country their chief opportunity for leisurely reading, and the Press caters for it amply with papers of wide popular appeal, of which the *News of the World* is a typical example. The principal papers read by educated people are the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times*. To those who grudge time spent on newspapers daily and yet want to keep informed of public affairs, it would be possible to do this by careful perusal of one of the Sunday papers named, adding to it perhaps the weekly

edition of *The Times* or the *Manchester Guardian*, which skim the cream of the daily issues, and this would doubtless give a better perspective over the week's events, supplemented for daily currency by the news bulletins on the radio, but certainly, if one doesn't grudge the daily ritual and it isn't disproportionate to other interests and engagements, study of *The Times* in the manner suggested is worth while.

Our newspaper may perhaps be more interesting to us if we read something about the Press, and there are excellent little books on it, in cheap editions, by G. Binney Diblee, Sir Alfred Robbins, A. J. Cummings and Wilson Harris, amongst others.

But the newspaper of course is not the only form of periodical literature—there are still the reviews. Most people read some periodical beside their newspaper, connected with their hobbies and special interests, or simply for pleasure, and there is of course a tremendous range of magazines and journals in this country and America, catering for every possible taste and interest. Here it is only necessary to mention the more serious literary and political reviews, weekly, monthly and quarterly; a regular perusal of at least one or two of which will be found a very worthwhile and indeed necessary extension of intelligent newspaper reading for the proper study of current affairs and cultural progress.

Among the weeklies, there are such journals as *The Spectator*, the *New Statesman and Nation*, and *Time and Tide*. Presenting somewhat different points of view, in the literary field, there is *The Times Literary Supplement*, with excellent reviews and a classified list of new books (and for education, the *Educational Supplement*). A more popular function is performed by a paper like *John o' London's Weekly*, and a quite distinctive place is held by the *Listener*, which reports and supplements the more serious broadcast programmes.

The monthlies include the *Contemporary*, *Cornhill*, *Fortnightly* (despite its name) and the *Nineteenth Century and After*; of the quarterlies, the best are the *Quarterly* and the *Round Table*, which latter is especially authoritative and important for the Empire.

and its world relations. A similar review in America is *Foreign Affairs*, and there are of course many excellent American reviews such as *Harpers*, *Scribners* and the *North American Review*, besides journals of more popular appeal like *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. The foregoing titles are of course only a few out of many, and changes are naturally liable to take place in this field from time to time. We have nothing in this country comparable with the Sunday editions of great American newspapers, like the *New York Times* or *Herald-Tribune*, which furnish ample reading for the whole family for a week.

Now, while one would probably subscribe to one or two journals for reading at home at leisure, it is obviously impossible for the ordinary person, lacking time and money, to do much more. Here comes in the function of the excellent reference departments of the public libraries, where a wide range of such reviews is readily accessible, and where by regular visits, perhaps weekly, the cream of the whole field can be skimmed in comfort. As much matter of permanent value appears in this form, it may be useful to mention that general indexes to periodical literature are published and can doubtless also be consulted in the reference library. Incidentally, a useful index to the contents of *The Times* also appears quarterly.

It is quite a good thing to make a practice of looking up subjects mentioned in the newspapers or reviews in a good encyclopaedia such as the *Britannica* or *Chambers*, and for countries, of consulting a good atlas.

## Poetry

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Those (if any) who have read straight through this book so far may well exclaim in some disgust, on seeing the above heading, is this to be all about so-called "cultural" interests?—is it to be all of the study rather than the open air and recreations and pursuits of physically active kinds? I would only ask for a little patience, or better still, the exercise of the gentle art of skipping, for we are coming to those other things, and they are not less important, but since there must be some kind of arrangement of subject-matter, however arbitrary, and reading is or can be a resource open to everyone of any age or condition at all times, it seemed natural to begin as we have done.

But then you may say, why now Poetry?—is it not a branch of literature like any other, and therefore comes under "Books and Reading"? why should it be specially treated? It is of course a branch of literature, perhaps the highest, and as such is dealt with along with all other branches in the guide already mentioned.

In a work on Leisure, however, there is a good reason for briefly dealing with poetry separately, just as there is later on for treating of drama, with its adjuncts of play-reading and acting and theatre-going. It is all the more desirable to mention it, because as I fully realize, poetry is far from popular with the majority of people, and normally plays little, if any, part in their lives. Yet poetry can be in itself, apart from, and independent of all other forms of literature, a deep resource and enrichment of life at all times, a source of strength and inspiration. Moreover, it is as much a companion for the open air, for journeys and tramps, as for the fireside. As for myself, I never go on a journey or holiday, a tramp or a cycle tour, without taking some poetry with me in selection or anthology or other easily pocketable form. Others have an even more abiding pleasure in being able to recite many favourite poems from memory, but my own

memory is too fallible, and I take care to provide myself, if not with chapter, at least with verse.

Arnold Bennett, in his *Literary Taste*, says, with perhaps intentional exaggeration, "There is a word, a 'name of fear' which rouses terror in the heart of the vast majority of the English-speaking race. That word is poetry." So far at least as the masculine portion of the reading public is concerned (it does not I think apply with equal force to women), there is probably a large measure of truth in it, and apart from the entirely illogical feeling that there is something effeminate in liking poetry, it is probably in part due to the unfortunate experience of many of us at school, where poetry (and the blank verse of Shakespeare's plays) was introduced as a "subject" in "lines" to be memorized and studied for metre and form. I confess to having been thus deprived for years of the joys of poetry, and of Shakespeare too, except that when I stumbled across fragments of "heroic" or narrative verse, such as Walter Scott's, or Tennyson's *Ballad of the Revenge*, or Macaulay's *Armada* or *Ivy* (historic events with a stir and a trumpet call in them) I could be fired with emotion, despite the otherwise unwelcome or suspect poetic form.

To those unfamiliar with or rather shy of poetry, perhaps the best plan is to select some straightforward narrative poem and read it as a story, disregarding as far as may be the verse form, as Bennett sensibly advises. There are many available, such as those mentioned, or Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, or Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, *Locksley Hall* and *Sixty Years After*. At the same time, read Hazlitt's *Essays on the Poets*, especially the one on Poetry in General, or Wordsworth's essays, or an excellent modern essay on what poetry is and means, by Robert Lynd, prefaced to Methuen's *Anthology of Modern Verse*.

Mention of anthologies suggests that a very good way to familiarize oneself with fine poetry under favourable conditions is to acquire one or two anthologies and to dip into them from time to time. Poetry is in essence fine prose intensified in emotion and expression (raised, as it were, to the highest power) and it therefore requires for full appreciation a concentration of atten-

tion which we do not normally give to prose, and which is proportionately tiring to the novice. So it will be found better to sample many poets, to begin with, in this way and through their finest or most characteristic work, than to attempt individual poets in detail. This method, moreover, affords a greater variety, which is a relief to the strain of attention, and the poems included in anthologies are not as a rule over-long.

There are many excellent anthologies, of which one need only mention here the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, *Palgrave's Golden Treasury*, and Rhys' *New Golden Treasury*, both in Everyman, the English Association's series of *Poems of Today*, and Methuen's *Anthology of Modern Verse*, which contains Robert Lynd's charming essay already mentioned. Wonderful value are the Little Pelican volumes, *A Book of English Poetry*, and the various parts of the Centunes' Poetry. The Poetry Society also issues a cheap and carefully-selected *Pocket-Book of English Poetry*. Admirable slim pocket selections of individual poets are the Augustan Books issued by Ernest Benn, of which well over a hundred titles have already been published.

Arnold Bennett, in the short and provocative section on verse in his *Literary Taste* (of which by the way a revised edition is available in the Pelican series) and W. H. Hudson in the chapter on Poetry in his *Introduction to the Study of English Literature*, both have some very sensible advice on the reading of poetry which should appeal to the average man and woman, and taken in conjunction with the suggestions already offered here, may attract the interest even of those who have fought most desperately shy of poetry so far. If perchance some are thus won over to the abiding joy and infinite resource of poetry, they may be lastingly grateful for a new enrichment of life.

In such an intimate and personal matter as taste in poetry, the reader who has come to appreciate it in the way above indicated is best left to find his own further paths in the new realm. The poets will by no means make the same appeal to all, and the reader must learn his own preferences by the natural and pleasant method of reading what most appeals to him irrespective of the

author's literary reputation. Taste will grow in discernment and strength only with exercise. Among the classics are Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, Herrick, Gray, Byron, Pope, Crabbe, Cowper, Burns, Keats, Shelley, Scott, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, D G Rossetti, Tennyson (with Fitz-Gerald's *Omar Khayyam* in a special category), Walt Whitman and Swinburne, to whom may be added Bridges, Masefield, and very many poets writing lately or at the present day, examples of whose work will be found in one or other of the anthologies or the Augustan booklets. Good editions of most of the classic poets exist in the Oxford books, the Canterbury poets, Everyman and World's Classics, and other volumes.

Poetry is essential a solitary and individual pleasure, but some like to enjoy it in company with congenial souls, and in this connection reference may be made to the Poetry Society, which encourages the formation of local branches or poetry-reading circles, and issues an excellent review for a modest subscription. Its quiet work in any case deserves support.

One last point. Poetry has been defined as "musical thought." In expression, it is musical speech, and by merely reading poetry to oneself in the printed pages, much of its force is lost. Poetry was originally composed to be declaimed in public, and by its very form and rhythm, it can only be fully appreciated by being read aloud. The habit of audible poetry-reading may heighten our appreciation of its beauties and perhaps react beneficially on our use of the English tongue. The declamatory value of poetry was fully appreciated by a modern American poet, Vachel Lindsay, who composed his poems especially to be recited by himself up and down the land, and all those who heard him, as did the present writer, were far more deeply impressed than they would have been or were by merely reading the same poems in print. There was lately a movement to have poetry readings in public, nay, even in public-houses, and there seems no reason why this should not be encouraged just as much as, say, chamber concerts—if not in pubs, at least in community centres, town